CHRISTINA STEAD JOSE YGLESIAS

THE NATION

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Fearsome Antagonist

THE PRESS CORPS' CASE AGAINST JOHNSON

Charles Roberts

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NEWSPAPER

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LETTERS

campus names

Stanford, Calif.

DEAR SIRS: Frank J. Donner states that "A [House Committee on Un-American Activities] investigator had obtained from Stanford University lists of student members of certain registered campus organizations" ["HUAC: From Pillory to Farce," *The Nation*, Sept. 5].

This statement is somewhat misleading. In response to a HUAC subpoena and on advice of counsel, the university provided the committee with the names of officers of four student organizations. While an organization must provide evidence that at least five members of the university community are interested in its activities, the university neither requires nor maintains membership lists for any organization.

Bob Beyers, Director, News Service, Stanford University

correction

Two most unfortunate printers' errors appeared in "Marx and Shame" by Harvey Swados (*The Nation*, Oct. 10). Where Mr. Swados characterized 19th-century Russia as a "seemingly hopelessly reactionary" social order, the word "hopelessly" was dropped; and where he cited Prof. Conor Cruise O'Brien as believing that "Socialist academics already had sufficient to do within the areas of their own competence," the word "Stalinist" was substituted for "Socialist."—*The Editors.*

Stalin at home and abroad

Bronxville, N. Y.

DEAR SIRS: In his article "Why We Fear Peasants in Revolt" [*The Nation* Sept. 26] Barrington Moore, Jr., presents us with an interesting but questionable argument: (a) If we deny that "Stalinist socialism played any significant part in bringing on the cold war" (b) "from that it would follow that under Stalin the Soviet Union constituted a freer, more humane society than did the capitalist democracies, in the years after the Second World War and a long time previously." Such an argument puts "an enormous strain on the organs of credulity," he concludes.

But the strain for me is in accepting Professor Moore's logic. He is suggesting that anyone who saw Soviet policy in the early postwar years as a defensive reaction to our own aggressive cold-war mentality must also deny the existence of purges, labor camps and censorship and be an apologist for all features of Soviet society. But it does not at all "follow" that a nation's domestic and foreign policy bear a one-to-one relationship to each other. The same Stalin who crushed all real and imagined opposition within his country may well have conducted himself in a conciliatory and cautious spirit when facing the world after World War II.

How much longer do we take the internal crimes of Stalinism as prima-facie evidence of Soviet culpability in starting the cold war? . . . *Michael Parenti*

Cambridge, Mass.

DEAR SIRS: In the paragraph to which Professor Parenti refers, I was both summarizing and rejecting certain aspects of Marxism, having in mind its moral and political commitment to socialism. Perhaps I erred in giving the impression that the system has greater logical coherence than it does. The next paragraph gives my own views and explicitly rejects any one-to-one correspondence between foreign and domestic policies.

On more specific issues, it seems to me that Soviet caution after World War II probably reflected a lively

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EDITORIALS

The *Detente* Rides Again

After many months of maintaining a rigid and even threatening countenance to mark its disapproval of the American role in Vietnam, the Soviet Union shows signs of warming up to a renewed dialogue with the United States. Its leaders and its press continue to denounce "American aggression," but recent concrete moves indicate that Moscow has decided to tread further the path of peaceful coexistence with Washington.

This change is no doubt linked, at least in part, to the continuing deterioration of Sino-Soviet relations. After the October 1 demonstrations in Peking and the expulsion of students from each other's country, the break between China and Russia seems beyond repair. The natural counterweight is closer relations with the West, and especially with the United States. There are many reasons to believe that all along the Soviet leadership would have liked to continue developing its ties with the United States in spite of the Vietnamese conflict but was prevented from doing so by the fear of providing fuel for Peking's propaganda successes with other Communist parties, especially in Asia, Africa and Latin America. In a remarkably short time the Chinese regime has lost considerable ground in its ideological struggle, and the excesses of the Red Guards have contributed to its isolation from the rest of the Communist world. Peking's inroads in the developing countries have been cut short, if not rolled back (as in Indonesia). Moscow has therefore regained a greater freedom of action.

The *détente* started moving again a few weeks ago with the announcement of a long-delayed American-Soviet agreement for a direct air link between the two countries. It developed further in talks between Soviet Minister Gromyko and Secretary Rusk, which have focused on two main topics: an international treaty to regulate activities in space and insure the demilitarization of the moon and other celestial bodies, and an agreement designed to halt the spread of nuclear weapons.

After a fairly auspicious beginning, negotiations on the space treaty had stalled when the Russians suddenly insisted on complete and obligatory reciprocity of rights to the use of tracking stations. This meant extending automatically to the Soviet Union the clause of "the most favored nation" in matters of space observation. After Ambassador Goldberg offered technical talks on this subject leading to the usual bilateral agreements, the Soviet delegation produced a revised version of its space treaty with considerably toned-down requests. Consultations are now proceeding smoothly enough, and the prospect of concluding and signing the treaty during the present session of the General Assembly is foreseen by both sides. This event would be hailed as a very important step in the *détente*, whereas only recently it seemed doubtful that the USSR would co-sign with the United States any meaningful agreement as long as the Vietnamese conflict continued.

The treaty on nonproliferation is much more complex and does not depend solely on the two superpowers. However, any progress has been prevented from the outset by

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basic disagreement between Washington and Moscow over limited nuclear sharing by West Germany. The fading of prospects for NATO's nuclear integration has eased the situation, and Andrei Gromyko has made unusually optimistic statements, which among other things concede the sincerity of the American desire to reach agreement.

He has expressed similar feelings toward the United States' junior partner, Britain, and has invited to Moscow Foreign Secretary George Brown, whose predecessor was snubbed when he tried to mediate in the Vietnamese War. True, Mr. Gromyko has again refused Mr. Brown's appeal for convening the Geneva Conference, but statements from Moscow, which had previously listed a whole series of conditions for initiating peace talks, are now selecting the cessation of bombings as the condition which would open the way for negotiations.

The Administration has always been eager to make concrete progress in its relationship with Moscow, but up to very recently it was rebuffed in direct proportion to the escalation of the Vietnamese operations. President Johnson's stepped-up campaign for an accommodation with Eastern Europe, on the eve of the Manila Conference and the November elections, seems to be well timed from the point of view of Soviet receptivity.

The crucial test—for Washington as well as for Moscow —will be whether the renewed dialogue can break the Vietnamese diplomatic deadlock and whether Moscow is willing and able to play broker with Hanoi.

ANNE WEILL-TUCKERMAN

What About Priorities?

A recent two-day conference at Columbia University was devoted to a discussion of "The National Priorities Problem: Choices and Consequences." Called by the indefatigable Seymour Melman and a group of faculty associates, it gave rise to nine illuminating papers on such topics as "The Garrison Society," "The Economic Consequences of Vietnam," "The Decay of American Cities," "The World Poverty Gap," etc. The question of priorities is obviously crucial. The mystery is why some alert and ambitious politician—say Sen. Robert Kennedy—has not perceived its enormous political opportunity.

Using only minimum figures and relying largely on government reports and official data, Melman inventories $76 billion a year of appropriations needed for a variety of programs: housing, health, education, transportation, natural resources, water and power, elimination of stream and air pollution, waste disposal.

The sum is large, but the money exists; however, today it is not going into constructive projects. Military spending, space and the AEC account for about $79 billion a year, or three-fourths of the federal budget. Patently something has to give. Awesome our gross national product may be, but it is still expressed in twelve digits. Hence the priorities problem. It is clear that the President has quietly abandoned his own contention that the American economy could sustain a steadily widening war, provide all the conveniences and luxuries that the middle and upper classes regard as their due, and simultaneously launch The Great Society.

Not so long ago, Mr. Johnson was uplifting Appalachia

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and getting credit for his humanitarianism. In the *Charleston Gazette*—such promises are not quickly forgotten in West Virginia—Harry Ernst reports from Washington that Governor Hulett C. Smith returned from a recent White House conference with orders to defer construction projects "in an effort to restrain the war-heated economy." The Governor, Ernst pointed out, "really doesn't have much of a choice because the President is in the process of trimming the federal aid which feeds most state construction projects." Among other projects that are being deferred in West Virginia is a $1 million expenditure to enable county school systems to take advantage of National Defense Education Funds, and $500,000 for vocational education. These cutbacks will hardly cool off the war-heated economy, but they indicate what is happening in various federal agencies and in those states where the politicians do not vociferously press their demands.

Aside from money considerations, priorities involve allocations of skilled manpower, which is always in short supply. It is impossible to tie up a major part of the country's most advanced scientists and engineers in military research and development without starving other fields of national interest. On this ground alone priorities should be an issue of national debate. The problem should be seen in the large so that people will understand what options exist. Our present politics are largely on the make-believe level, politicians vying with one another to make elections as meaningless as possible. An honest grappling with priorities would do much to restore reality to the hustings.

Our Bourbon Allies

In the October 9 *New York Times Magazine*, Neil Sheehan, under the autobiographical title "Not a Dove, But No Longer a Hawk," presents the most candid and shocking account of the Vietnamese War to date. Sheehan is qualified: he served as the *Times* correspondent in Vietnam for two years, beginning in April, 1962; then returned for another year in 1965. This second tour ended last August. Sheehan's dispatches were not notably expostulatory; another *Times* correspondent, David Halberstam, raised considerably more hell during his stay. But now that it is over for him, Sheehan has unburdened himself with redoubled force.

The gist of his revelations is that the United States intervened in a class war, a war in which the mandarin caste and its mercenaries were and are arrayed against the Communists, with the bulk of the rural population in the middle. Involuntarily—for he went to Vietnam as a supporter of the U.S. crusade and still sees no way out—Sheehan is a witness for the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese. He shows how in the first Indo-China war, the native aristocracy cooperated with the colonial French. "Now," he says, "the same Vietnamese, for identical reasons, cooperate with the United States." Among these coadjutors or, to use a less polite term, quislings, is the current premier, Nguyen Cao Ky, once a pilot for the French. Other members of the ruling junta were likewise officers or sergeants in the French forces. "They are the Vietnamese who have inherited the worst of two cultures—the pretentiousness of the native mandarins and the rigidity of the French colonial officers and administrators." Plus, he could have added, a massive dose of American hypocrisy.

All measures for reform, in land ownership for instance, "have been sabotaged because the regimes were and are composed of men who are members of, or who are allied with, mandarin families that held title to properties they have no intention of renouncing. While there are some patriotic and decent individuals among them, most of the men who run Saigon have, like the Bourbons, learned nothing and forgotten nothing. They seek to retain what privileges they have and to regain those they have lost. . . . The Communist Party is the one truly national organization that permeates both North and South Vietnam. . . . The Communists, despite their brutality and deceit, remain the only Vietnamese capable of rallying millions of their countrymen to sacrifice and hardship in the name of the nation and the only group not dependent on foreign bayonets."

A more corrupt regime probably has never battened on the lives and treasure of a great power in modern times. Sheehan says that American officials with long experience in Vietnam estimate that about 20 per cent of U.S. aid supplied for counterinsurgency projects in the countryside finds its way to the Vietcong, while another 30 to 40 per cent is diverted by government officials. "What gets down to the poor son of a bitch in the paddy field," one U.S. official told Sheehan, "is a trickle." Complaints from the U.S. Embassy led Ky to warn his fellow generals that "they were embezzling too much and should exercise some restraint. Their reply was that they had to think of their families." Ky then publicly executed a lone Chinese businessman.

The moral effects are what one would expect: "Bars and bordellos, thousands of young Vietnamese women degrading themselves as bar girls and prostitutes, gangs of hoodlums and beggars and children selling their older sisters and picking pockets have become ubiquitous features of urban life." In a parallel manifestation of "GI culture," the countryside is ravaged by American bombs and chemical defoliants. More than a million displaced peasants crowd the refugee camps, where the government leaves most of them to shift for themselves. Both the urban and rural societies of an ancient civilization are being destroyed.

Sheehan, now serving as the *Times* correspondent at the Pentagon, ends his account on a note of near despair. As he sees it, we have gone too far to retreat. We shall have to put up with our mandarin allies, continue to rely on our magnificent killing machine, and hope that its efficiency will be so high that "someday" it will bring us to a "favorable" settlement.

One can appreciate his dilemma, one can even feel a twinge of sympathy for him as he hangs suspended between hawks and doves; just the same it is a strange position for a man of his discernment and compassion.

Confrontation at Latrobe

During the first week of October, residents of the greater Pittsburgh area who dialed the local Birchite "Let Freedom Ring" number were told that "the international Communist conspiracy suffered a major defeat" from a right-wing razzle-dazzle aimed at forcing the cancellation of a college forum.

This event had caused reporters and television cameras on October 3-4 to converge on Latrobe, a community some

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40 miles east of Pittsburgh, where the most unlikely antagonists turned out to be 120-year-old St. Vincent College, conducted by the Benedictine monks, and a noisy crowd of right-wing extremists.

The script was familiar: a student organization with the sanction of the administration and encouragement of the faculty, had scheduled a seminar on Marxism, and had further shocked conservative community opinion by inviting a real live Communist to lecture. The Birchite troops, of course, became his best advance men and focused attention on a seminar that would have otherwise gone unnoticed beyond the campus.

Three hours before Dr. Herbert Aptheker, the Communist historian, and his three fellow panelists were scheduled to begin "A Week's Study on Communism" in the college auditorium, some 200 pickets appeared at the campus entrance. The Benedictines, who along with student association leaders had been receiving numerous telephone threats, reported a call that a bomb was located in the building.

State police had been advised by the college months earlier that the seminar and its controversial participant might provoke demonstrations. Instead of undertaking to impose order, however, the cops urged cancellation of the forum "for public safety." They would even be happy to escort Dr. Aptheker off the campus.

At this point, the Benedictines departed from the script. Instead of knuckling under to the Birchites at the gates, they suspended classes for one day, so that all 800 students and an additional 300 seminarians might attend the seminar. A packed student union—with closed-circuit television bringing the proceedings to overflow audiences in two additional buildings—heard the Communist, a New Left defector (Philip Abbot Luce), a Hungarian general and a political scientist discuss Marxism and answer questions.

With the exception of the press, youthful state police in collegiate dress and obvious FBI types detailed to cover Aptheker, the program was limited to the academic community. The bomb intimidation moved St. Vincent President Maynard J. Brenan to say that only a "vociferous minority" had opposed the seminar, and to note that some were incensed because a Catholic college was playing host to a Communist.

"But why not a Catholic campus?" Father Brenan asked. "If anything, 'Catholic' implies open-mindedness, fairness, justice and charity above all. We must be open to dialogue, questioning, constant change." The students agreed. They denounced the pressure and observed that a Birch sound truck had rallied the pickets with emotional charges of "treason on campus while our boys are dying in Vietnam."

Father Brenan and the student leaders held a press conference three days after the truncated "Week's Study" took place. They told of the well-financed campaign to intimidate, the threats and the bomb scare. "Christian Crusaders" of Billy James Hargis were on campus in cars with Oklahoma plates, radio time was purchased, leaflets distributed.

But in the end the Birchers only dramatized the fact that it could be dangerous to conduct a lawful assembly on a college campus, that the police would rather cancel than protect such a meeting and that academic freedom has come of age in places that have not always espoused it.

'Traitors To Their Constituents'

In discussing whether the Constitution contained adequate safeguards against usurpation of power by the military, the 26th "Federalist Paper" found reassurance in the fact that Congress would be obliged, at least once in every two years, "to deliberate upon the propriety of keeping a military force on foot; to come to a new resolution on the point; and to clear their sense of the matter, by formal vote in the face of their constituents." The inference was that a member would become "a traitor to his constituents" if he were to give free rein to the military, and the aggrieved constituents would rise up and deal with the miscreant who had so abused his power.

Much of the thought of the founding fathers, so cogent in the context of the late 18th century, has this same air of quaint irrelevance today. In *The Professional Soldier: a Social and Political Portrait* (1960), Morris Janowitz quotes Lewis Dexter, who interviewed selected members of Congress, as saying that "no one with whom I talked ever maintained that Congress has any significant role in the formulation of military policies." Such is the effect of imposing, permanently it would seem, a huge military establishment on a country that for the major part of its existence had little use for large standing armies or naval forces.

A striking confirmation of the impotence of Congress in ruling the military establishment is to be found in the action of the House on an amendment to the military appropriations measure, at the session of October 11. The House voted 305 to 42 to give the President power to call up any unit of the ready reserve for a period not to exceed twenty-four months, *without declaring a national emergency*. The Senate passed the same measure by voice vote. Usually Congress has insisted on its right to approve mobilizations; President Kennedy obtained approval to call up the reserves at the time of the Berlin crisis. Now Congress has relinquished even this remnant of its power and responsibility to declare war, and until June 30, 1968, the President can call up individuals and units of the reserve without further ado.

The President has never requested authority to summon reservists to active duty without the normal prerequisite of a declaration of national emergency. Congress acted this time of its own volition in a matter where the Executive has traditionally taken the initiative. Apparently some members, Senator Russell, for example, feel so strongly that some reserve units should be called up that they insisted on thrusting this power on the President.

Regardless of what considerations may have prompted it, this is an extraordinary delegation of power to the President—to any President. Yet it has been done, and with little public notice or concern. It would seem that for the public, as well as Congress, a new era has dawned, in which the old safeguards are no longer treasured.

The author of the 26th "Federalist Paper," whose ashes have long since become "siftings on siftings in oblivion," was, of course, Alexander Hamilton—no negligible fighter himself when there was fighting to be done, and for these many decades admired beyond all the other founders by the well heeled and well born. Apparently he too has been cast away, and the ship sails on over uncharted waters.

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THE PRESS VIEWS LBJ

FEARSOME ANTAGONIST

CHARLES ROBERTS

Mr. Roberts has been Newsweek's *Washington correspondent for twelve years. His* LBJ's Inner Circle *was published by Delacorte.*

Washington

In the historic East Room of the White House, its grandeur only slightly marred by the blinking red eyes and snaking cables of TV cameras, President Johnson laid down two big news stories for the Washington press corps on October 6. At one of his rare live-TV news conferences, he announced plans for his 25,000-mile, six-nation Asian-Pacific tour and named career diplomat Llewellyn Thompson as Ambassador to the Soviet Union.

In the question period that followed his announcements Mr. Johnson's answers were, for the most part, substantive and responsive to the questions asked. (He said firmly, for instance, that he had "no plans" to support segregationist Democratic gubernatorial candidates in the South.) Even more remarkable, his replies were delivered in good humor. He had no complaints about recent stories misrepresenting his position, nor did he cut off correspondents in mid-question or browbeat any who presumed to ask searching questions in sensitive areas.

It was the President's seventy-eighth press conference in less than thirty-five months — and one of his best performances. To "regular" White House reporters who have covered most of his conferences, at home and away, there was a simple explanation for the President's good behavior: he was on TV.

When it comes to meeting the reporters, the regulars learned long ago, there are two President Johnsons. In his office, where most conferences are held, without benefit of TV cameras, the President is a fearsome antagonist. The transcripts of these encounters, printed in only two or three newspapers, rarely show how severely the President deals with questions—or questioners—he doesn't like. The other Lyndon Johnson emerges when TV cameras are projecting him into the living rooms of Keokuk and Alhambra. (He has had just twenty live-TV conferences.) Then he is the very model of a modern President—courteous, smiling, sincere, uncomplaining, exuding information and brimming with bonhomie.

Washington newsmen can and do live with this schizophrenic situation, but the President's news conferences are only a small, though highly visible, part of his dealings with the press. His press relations, which go on for 365 days a year, are a more complicated—and a sadder—story. It is a story that needs telling not because there are some disgruntled reporters in Washington but because the press (including radio and TV) is still the primary means of communication between the President and the American people.

It is, in fact, his primary means of communication with the world. A President may be a formidable man in face-to-face encounters, as Lyndon Johnson is when he administers the "treatment" to a visiting head of state. He may fire off 100 letters a day and he may be tremendously effective on the telephone. Lyndon Johnson has made the phone an instrument of national policy. But what he has to say *publicly*—whether to officials of his own Administration, to President de Gaulle, to Premier Ky in Saigon, to an unruly left-wing faction on a Caribbean island, or to warring Watusi tribesmen in Africa—he must communicate through the press if he is really to be heard.

At the same time, in its reporting of what he says and does, the press has a unique opportunity and responsibility to hold the President accountable for the conduct of his office. If the press is, as its owners insist, a public trust, then it must examine his every act critically. And, in the Presidential press conference, it has the opportunity to raise questions on behalf of the public, to make him answerable to his vast constituency.

The Presidential press conference is still our nearest equivalent to—and in some ways an improvement on—the time-honored question period in the British House of Commons. This is an important relationship then, not just for newsmen or the President, but for the welfare of the country. It is, in fact, as Walter Lippmann has said, "a great matter of state."

The first thing to be said about Presidential press relations, in fairness to Mr. Johnson, is that friction between the Chief Executive and newsmen and news media did not originate with Mr. Johnson; it is as old as the Presidency itself. George Washington, who was generally scornful of "publick" printers, nevertheless resorted to the primitive device of playing favorites to get a good press. He handed the only copy of one of his most important speeches to a single Philadelphia newspaper. Other papers called him "treacherous," "mischievous," "inefficient" and "pusillanimous."

When he submitted the first draft of his Farewell Address to the first Presidential ghost writer, Alexander Hamilton, it contained a passage striking back at the press for its abuse of him. It was Hamilton, apparently, who struck out the passage, thus establishing a rule that some wise politicians still follow: Don't fight the press, or, in more earthy terms, don't get in a spraying contest with a skunk.

Washington's successor, John Adams, had a simpler idea for getting things printed just the way he wanted them to appear. He proposed the establishment of a paper that would speak for the President. Thomas Jefferson, the man who said he would prefer a nation without a government to a nation without newspapers, seemed to prefer a nation with just one newspaper while he was President. He designated a single journal, the *National Intelligencer*, as his mouthpiece. Not surprisingly, he was accused in other papers of being an atheist, keeping a mistress, trying to seduce a friend's wife and padding his expense accounts.

This led Jefferson to make a cynical proposal which I can almost hear Lyndon Johnson making today. Jefferson suggested, half seriously, that editors should divide their papers into sections labeled "Truths," "Probabilities," "Pos-

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sibilities" and "Lies." The first section, he observed wryly, would be the smallest and the last the biggest.

Almost every President since has shared this acid feeling toward the press when things weren't going his way —when he was having trouble prosecuting a frustrating war (the Civil War, the Korean War or the Vietnamese War); when he was embarrassed by the misdeeds of his associates (the tribulations of Grant, Harding, Truman, Eisenhower and Lyndon Johnson come to mind); or when the press pried into his family affairs (here you can name any of the thirty-five men who have held the office).

The Presidents have struck back at their tormentors in various ways. Theodore Roosevelt, though he was the first President to provide working space for the press in the White House, shunned correspondents he disliked, while lavishing exclusive stories on "reliable" reporters.

Woodrow Wilson, who in 1913 conceived the Presidential press conference as we now know it—"to take the people of the country into his confidence"—lost confidence in his own invention and simply stopped seeing the reporters.

Franklin D. Roosevelt, though generally regarded as the most adept President at handling newsmen, once tried to stand a reporter in a corner with a dunce cap on his head and, on another occasion, awarded the German Iron Cross to a correspondent he thought had given comfort to the Nazis. Harry Truman, in a sulfurous letter, threatened to kick a *Washington Post* music critic where it would hurt the most for writing an unsympathetic review of his daughter's vocal efforts. Even President Eisenhower, whose bland manner evoked gentle handling by the press, once stalked angrily out of a news conference when pressed on the subject of McCarthyism in his administration.

John F. Kennedy, almost as thin-skinned as President Johnson, made light of his bad notices with the deft paraphrase that he was "reading more now but enjoying it less." But this did not alter the fact that he phoned reporters to complain about their stories, that he peevishly canceled his subscription to the New York *Herald Tribune*, and that on at least one occasion he phoned a publisher in an effort to have a reporter taken off an assignment. *The New York Times* left David Halberstam where he was—in Vietnam—and Halberstam won a Pulitzer Prize.

It is clear from history, then, that the relations between press and President never have run smooth—at least not for long. But never in the past decade of off-again-on-again Presidential press relations have those relations been *off* for as long as they have been under Mr. Johnson.

There is no way to measure press relations, but all evidence suggests that Mr. Johnson's are the worst since an aloof, embittered and inept Herbert Hoover pulled into a depression foxhole in 1931 and asked the press, in effect, to leave him alone. That was, by coincidence, the year that Lyndon Johnson first came to Washington, as an aide to a Texas Congressman. It is one of the ironies of the present situation that when he succeeded to the office Mr. Johnson had had more experience in dealing with the press (a period of thirty-two years) than had any President before him.

After he became President at Dallas, LBJ enjoyed a traditional press honeymoon of three or four months. During that abbreviated era of good feelings, newsmen swam naked with the President in the White House pool, attended

"You think you're so damned smart . . . !"

Conrad: Los Angeles Times

Kaffeeklatsches in his office, and enjoyed beer barbecues at the LBJ Ranch. Though it was sometimes difficult to make notes on the President's "background" thoughts while clutching a barbecued rib in one hand and a paper cup of beer in the other, there was almost a spirit of camaraderie.

During those first four months, White House regulars —the handful of reporters who cover the President daily, at home or on the road—amused themselves by trying to guess when and where Mr. Johnson would hold his next press conference. He tried a dozen different formats, including one on a bale of hay at the ranch.

A curtain of ice first descended between press and President in March, 1964, after reporters wrote that Johnson had sped at 80 or 90 miles an hour down a Texas highway in his white Lincoln Continental with a Dixie Cup of Pearl beer close at hand. The President had entertained us at his ranch that day. There was precious little drinking—of beer or anything else. When the first stories appeared, he felt, with some justification, that his hospitality had been violated. But in the aftermath there seemed to be no soul-searching on the part of the President who, after all, *had* endangered the life of the leader of the Free World. There was just anger at the press for printing the story. He has never been quite as relaxed with reporters since.

The speeding story was followed by a difficult period in which Mr. Johnson was surprisingly uncommunicative —for a man so garrulous. George Reedy, his then press secretary (he has had three in less than three years), tried to fill the word gap with a torrent of circumlocution, but was largely uninformative. Some of Mr. Reedy's long-winded answers used to remind me of the boy who was asked to spell "banana." "I know how to spell it," he said, "but I don't know when to stop."

As expected, the President thawed out during the 1964

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campaign when he felt the need of a good press. But the situation was exacerbated, rather than helped, by his landslide victory that November. At his first post-election press conference, in a memorable thirty-minute session at the LBJ Ranch, he took four gratuitous slaps at the weary instant historians who had followed him through the campaign. A couple of examples: He ridiculed us for "premature" speculation about his intentions in Vietnam. The "speculation" all came true, in spades, a few months later. He told us we had "misled" our readers about the possibility that a Texas politician, Marvin Watson, would join his staff. A few weeks later, Watson joined his staff.

Since then, despite the fact that no President has worked harder to cultivate a good press—he is attracted to the press as is a moth to the flame—Mr. Johnson's press relations have suffered a steady erosion. Now, despite some heroic salvage efforts by his third press secretary, Bill D. Moyers, there is deep distrust on both sides. And during the period since his election the Administration's "credibility gap" has widened by a country mile.

On his side, Mr. Johnson has many complaints—some of them well founded—against the press. He is wary of "self-styled intellectuals" in the Washington press corps (a phrase he used in a San Antonio speech). He is weary of those recurring stories comparing his "style" with that of President Kennedy—a weariness that I share. No two Presidents have the same style, and style is *not* substance, as some Kennedy-worshiping LBJ critics contend. He cannot bear stories probing or guessing at his motives or intentions—which is a highly hazardous pastime in the case of so complicated and unpredictable a man.

Never reconciled to the fact that conflict makes bigger news than orderly events, he sees his minor embarrassments and reverses (such as an unfavorable vote in a Congressional committee) magnified, while his hard-won and significant victories (such as the establishment of a democratic government in the Dominican Republic) are relegated to the back pages. In short, he feels that he doesn't get a fair shake from those newsmen who follow him around like friends, but obviously aren't.

How do the newsmen feel about him? First, it should be made clear that few, if any, of Johnson's Boswells are against him on partisan grounds. Many, perhaps most, are advocates of both the Great Society and the Vietnamese War. Nearly all stand in awe of the President's back-breaking work schedule and his tremendous legislative record. Most agree that he has been the most accessible of Presidents. Mr. Johnson has seen more reporters individually and held far more news conferences in his first three years in office than did either President Eisenhower or President Kennedy.

But there is much more to press relations than accessibility and holding news conferences. The working White House reporters' grievances against the President divide roughly into five categories.

¶ Impediments to good reporting, minor annoyances, crop up with such regularity that they seem to be planned—perhaps by a vindictive President.

¶ The President is hypersensitive to criticism, or even to stories which may provoke criticism.

¶ The President has a passion for secrecy.

¶ His press conferences are proving unsatisfactory as a means of extracting information from him.

¶ And most important, it has become the fact that the White House, yea, even the President, cannot always be believed.

These grievances add up to a serious indictment and they therefore require substantiation. First, the minor irritants. Every business has them, but at the White House, under LBJ, they seem to be systematically manufactured, as if someone in there were saying: "Lets make it hard for those so-and-sos to do their jobs." Early in this Administration, for example, "pool" reporters—representing the entire White House press—were removed from the President's airplane, thereby cutting the contact we had maintained with him (and his predecessors) between jet stops.

After that, press planes (booked by the White House but paid for by the correspondents) began flying so far behind the President that on some trips reporters covering the President never saw him. On a trip to Princeton, N. J., the press plane was diverted to an outlying airport, and reporters had to make their way to the scene of a Presidential speech by commandeering a garbage truck. There are enough such examples to make it certain that such confusion doesn't just happen. (In Eisenhower's day, under James Hagerty, the planes, trains and mimeograph machines ran on time.)

Next, the President's thin skin—the thinnest in American politics today. His hypersensitivity to criticism, despite thirty-five years in public life, could be forgiven if Mr. Johnson took his lumps in retrospect like, say, Harry Truman, author of the famous political dictum: "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen"; or Winston Churchill, who said he didn't resent criticism "even when, for the sake of emphasis, it parts for the time with reality." President Johnson takes no such philosophical attitude. On the contrary, he is outraged by almost any story that portrays him in a less than flattering light. And when thus incensed, he habitually turns on the press as a whipping boy.

When he sent Secretary of State Rusk instead of Vice President Humphrey to Winston Churchill's funeral—and was criticized—he failed to acknowledge, except in a bitterly sarcastic jibe at the press, that he might have erred. It was the press that made an incident of it, he insisted.

When he angered a whole subcontinent by his abrupt and undiplomatic cancellation of invitations to Pakistan's President Ayub and India's Prime Minister Shastri, again it was those troublemaking reporters—not the President—who had stirred up a fuss.

Last spring, when the President intimated to a group of White House fellows that he might ask Congress for a tax increase soon if prices continued to rise, and the Associated Press duly reported his remarks, the President took an even more startling tack. He angrily blamed the conscientious A.P. White House correspondent for that day's $10 billion drop in prices on the New York Stock Exchange.

A phrase the President used in deploring the Ayub-Shastri stories gives some insight into his ideas about the functions of the press. When I asked at a news conference about the postponement of the visits, he glared and lamented that we had "speculated" about his reasons for telling the two Asian leaders, in effect, to unpack their bags. To Mr. Johnson "speculate," clearly, is a dirty word. And all

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stories ruminating on what he might do or why are branded "speculative," which is to say, *evil*.

Though for many years such stories, variously known as think pieces or thumbsuckers, have passed for public discussion of problems confronting the President, Mr. Johnson feels that they narrow his "options." Apparently the President thinks that the press should print the news, in tape-recorder fashion, just as he dictates it, without any unauthorized explanation, interpretation, background or speculation. If that day comes, it should be noted, there will be no need for White House correspondents—the *Federal Register* dutifully reports the President verbatim.

Conrad: Los Angeles Times

The President hates to be anticipated, and this relates to the third grievance—Mr. Johnson's love of secrecy. The timing of announcements is essential to both politics and statecraft. For years, we have heard a succession of White House press secretaries say: "When we have anything to announce we'll announce it." And most of us agree that a President should not "permit the priorities of the press to hustle the procedures of government."

But with Lyndon Johnson, secrecy is carried to such extremes that it sometimes seems to interfere with the orderly process of government, as well as with reasonable enterprise on the part of correspondents. The President, in fact, seems to have an Alice in Wonderland concept of the news. Like the Queen of Hearts, nothing is so until he says it's so. And if anyone in government says something is so before Mr. Johnson says it, he risks the fate of the Queen's courtiers.

Nothing angers him more than to have the name of a prospective Presidential appointee appear in the press before he makes the appointment. Last March he was furious when *The Washington Post* reported that he had decided to name Deputy Under Secretary of State U. Alexis Johnson as his ambassador to Japan.

After reading the report he barged into a news conference being conducted by Agriculture Secretary Orville Freeman to denounce it. He branded it "some kid's statement over at the State Department"—a phrase that was changed to "some*one's* statement" in the sanitized transcript of his remarks put out by the White House.

His obvious anger at being scooped by the *Post* made the future of Alex Johnson a forbidden subject at the State Department—until last month when Mr. Johnson, apparently having cooled down, made it official and named him our ambassador to Japan.

After many such instances, White House aides have adopted a policy of refusing to discuss even what *kind* of man the President might seek to fill any government job. I laughed, a year ago, when a member of the President's staff told me that if I printed the name of a likely candidate for a sub-Cabinet job, I would scuttle for all time that candidate's chances of getting the job. But then, last month, in a lecture to newsmen on the evils of speculation, the President virtually confirmed that that *is* his policy:

> When you see on the ticker that Oshkosh says that Bob Pierpoint may be named Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff [he said, looking at C.B.S. News Correspondent Robert Pierpoint] you don't necessarily give much credence to it, because the very fact that it is on there is the best indication that it is not likely to happen.

This is now known as "The Oshkosh Rule."

The fourth grievance is aimed at the quality of the President's press conferences. Mr. Johnson, as I have noted, holds enough of them. ("Enough of them" reminds me of Bill Moyers' reply when asked how long was the incision the surgeons made to remove the President's gall stones. His reply was "long enough.") As of the week of October 3, the President had faced the press seventy-eight times in less than thirty-five months—an average of better than two press conferences a month. But on qualitative, rather than quantitative analysis, LBJ's conferences fall below the standards set by his two immediate predecessors.

Unlike Eisenhower's and Kennedy's, which were scheduled and announced to correspondents in advance, Mr. Johnson's are known in advance only to LBJ. In most cases, White House correspondents are called into them with little or no advance warning. These "quickies" exclude journalists from other beats—the State Department, Justice, Treasury and the Pentagon—who might come to ask prepared, incisive, detailed questions in their areas. The regular White House correspondents, who must be specialists mainly on LBJ, rarely have time to prepare for a dialogue in which they, willy-nilly, speak for the voters.

The President is obviously aware of the advantage he carries into such a conference. In these impromptu meetings, a Presidential aide once boasted to me, the reporters "never lay a glove" on the champ. To make sure they don't, the President keeps reporters off balance by interrupting them, twitting them about the shortcomings of their profession, and bristling at those who probe into sensitive areas.

President Eisenhower, despite his tangled, five-star syntax, usually told us what he thought. Mr. Kennedy gave witty answers, but was basically an artful dodger. President Johnson, though he has a firmer grasp of issues than Eisenhower,

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and just as firm a purpose as JFK, is neither candid nor witty. Indeed, the President's purpose in his impromptu conferences seems to be to dominate and even intimidate the press rather than tell reporters what is on his mind.

Nothing the President does has engendered more hostility among newsmen than his constant deriding, belittling and berating of the press. If reporters could talk back to the President in his news conferences—which, by custom and in the interest of public safety, they can't—one of the first messages they would get to him would be: "Look, Mr. President, you run your business and let us run ours."

But the gravest of Johnson's errors in dealing with the press is not his continual criticism of it but his repeated efforts to try to fool the reporters, and hence the public. The fact that the President of the United States cannot always be believed is far more ominous for his and the country's future than his rudeness and lack of consideration toward journalists, his hypersensitivity or his passion for secrecy.

White House reporters who had not covered LBJ as a Senator got their first inkling of his deviousness, of his willingness to play a little fast and loose with the facts, less than a month after he took office. In his first press conference, asked about the federal budget he would send to Congress in January, 1964, the President pointed out that John F. Kennedy's last budget amounted to $98.8 billion, and he would have to add about $3.5 billion to that to cover "built-in" increases in the cost of government.

A few days later, at a backgrounder in Austin, Tex., reporters were led to believe, on highest authority, that the President couldn't possibly keep the budget under $100 billion. They wrote their budget stories accordingly.

When he submitted his first budget in January, 1964, about a month later, it totaled $97.7 billion—a breathtaking $3 billion to $4 billion under what the President and his aides had held out as an irreducible minimum. *Voilà!* Mr. Johnson looked like a fiscal Houdini—and the press, which had been used, looked ridiculous.

Later in 1964, the North Vietnamese government extended a peace feeler to the United States through UN Secretary-General U Thant. The Secretary-General was sufficiently impressed to get the Hanoi government to agree to meet an American representative in Rangoon.

We might never have heard of this offer if U Thant had not made a speech in February, 1965, charging that the American people were not getting all the facts about the war. When the White House was asked to comment, it denied U Thant's charge, saying there were then no "meaningful proposals" before the U.S. Government.

Not until last fall, after Adlai Stevenson's death, did the press—and the public—get the facts straight. Eric Sevareid, a distinguished alumnus of this school, then reported that Ambassador Stevenson had told him, before his death, of the Hanoi feeler.

How now? the State Department was asked. "Yes," State then recalled, there *had* been a proposal from Hanoi through U Thant, but it was "too nebulous" to be taken seriously.

The White House had an out, of sorts. It had said that it had no *"meaningful"* proposals before it. But in view of the President's oft-repeated call for "unconditional" talks, and his insistence that "our antennae are always out" for feelers, the Administration had not enhanced its reputation for veracity.

The next widening of the credibility gap, or the chasm of candor, came in February, 1965, when the President first ordered sustained aerial bombing north of the 17th Parallel in Vietnam. Correspondents were routed out of bed that morning of February 7 to hear that American planes had attacked an ammunition dump at Dong Hoi, just over the North Vietnamese border.

Did this mean the President was escalating the war? No, we were told, it was a "reprisal" raid, answering a Vietcong mortar attack on the American barracks at Pleiku the day before. It was not a change of strategy, the White House maintained, but only in "tactics." The Administration stuck to that position during the weeks and months of air attacks that followed. These facts are susceptible of only two interpretations: Either this is the longest reprisal raid in history and the war was never escalated, or the White House uttered an untruth.

Two months later, in April, 1965, President Johnson ordered 2,500 American paratroopers into the Dominican Republic. The sole purpose of his intervention in the Dominican revolution, he solemnly told us, was to protect the lives of some 2,000 Americans living in that country.

When, after 1,100 Americans had been evacuated and the President had escalated the U.S. troop commitment to 21,500 (about twenty times the number of Americans remaining to be protected) newsmen asked whether this was still just a life-saving mission. The answer was "yes."

Not until May 2 did the President acknowledge that he had intervened to prevent a Communist take-over in Santo Domingo. Then, the following month, in a burst of Texas hyperbole, he told a news conference that "some 1,500 innocent people were murdered and shot and their heads cut off"—a statement that has never been substantiated by any investigating agency.

The Dominican case is the more distressing because there was no apparent need for distortion. There is, in fact, good reason to believe that some readers and listeners who gagged on the story of the life-saving mission would have swallowed with alacrity a simple explanation that we were intervening to prevent another Castro in the Caribbean.

In the fall of 1965, when aluminum producers announced a price increase which the President regarded as inflationary, our credulity was again strained past the breaking point. The Administration promptly announced it would dump aluminum from government stockpiles on the market. This was an obvious (and incidentally, successful) move to force a price rollback. But when newsmen asked the obvious question, the White House told them there was "no connection whatsoever" between the two moves. LBJ, we were supposed to believe, had just decided to get rid of some old aluminum.

There are other examples of outright prevarications, half-truths, and misleading denials by this Administration. Few of them involved the national security, where most newsmen are willing to abide by Bill Moyers' prudent finding that "there is a season for everything, including silence."

The record is now so murky that Mr. Johnson is suffering what his own ambassador to the UN, Arthur Goldberg, called a "crisis of confidence" and what the Republicans are gleefully advertising as the "credibility gap." Now, when

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the President says there is no need for a tax increase, we wonder. Now, when he says we are willing to talk to anyone, anywhere, any time, about peace in Vietnam, the heads of other governments must ask: "Does he really mean it?" This despite the fact that no one loses more sleep over the precarious state of our economy or more wants an honorable peace in Vietnam than Lyndon Johnson.

Defenders of the President may say, with him, that the news media are sometimes wrong, too. They are sometimes wrong out of malice, sometimes from haste, and often for want of better information from the government. But the central fact in any discussion of comparative credibility is that the United States Government cannot *afford* to be misleading or untruthful. As we learned in the U-2 incident and at the Bay of Pigs, not only the President but the whole country suffers when our head of government is caught dissembling or lying. As James Reston has noted: "Even the most powerful government cannot be effective if it is not to be trusted, if thoughtful and disinterested men, including our friends and allies, are always scanning our official statements and actions for some unstated motive other than the one given."

The President's press relations, then, are important, not just for the newsmen or the President but for our national security. The Presidency is too important an office to be covered by a habitually disgruntled press. Skeptical reporters, yes, but not angry reporters. And the role of the press in covering the President is too important for the President continually to deride and derogate it.

What can be done?

The situation, as I see it (and as the French would describe it), is hopeless but not desperate. An easing of tensions could start with token concessions on both sides. If, say, the President would start announcing his weekend travel plans by Wednesday noon, the press would stop dropping cigarette ashes on his sculptured blue carpet. If the President would hold one pre-announced, live-TV news conference every fortnight instead of three unannounced quickies a week (and not consume most of them reading prepared announcements), then the reporters would ask more intelligent questions.

From these minor accommodations we could proceed to more substantive matters. If the President would recognize that the press is not working either for him or against him, but merely doing its job, then the press could rededicate itself to the difficult task of covering clearly and objectively a very complex man in an incredibly demanding job. (This would not rule out "speculation," but we could do with fewer stories on LBJ's "style" or lack of it.)

We then would still be a long way from a full *détente*. But for our part, we do not want fraternization—only full disclosure within the bounds of the national security. We do not want to be captivated by the President's charm any more than we want to be intimidated by his anger.

Solution of the most serious problem—the unbelievable White House—is admittedly most difficult, for here the initiative must come from the President. And this, I fear, may be like asking the leopard to change his spots.

However, I don't think we're going to have a healthy relationship between press and President—with mutual respect and lessened hostility—*until* Mr. Johnson is convinced that Presidents of the United States must tell the truth, and nothing but the whole, unvarnished truth. Helping him make that decision is surely a job for the one ordained Baptist minister on his staff, his press secretary, the Rev. Bill D. Moyers. In this undertaking, Mr. Moyers will have the full support of the White House press.

MISSISSIPPI

THE NEW PLANTATIONS

MARVIN HOFFMAN and JOHN MUDD

Mr. Hoffman is director of Leadership Training for the Child Development Group of Mississippi. Mr. Mudd is the Group's executive director.

The tragedy of the poverty program, as it emerges today in Mississippi, one of the states where the need for it cries out most loudly, is that just when it is becoming possible to visualize the social processes necessary for effective "community action," this understanding has been made irrelevant and unusable by the impending emasculation and dismemberment of the Office of Economic Opportunity. The creative potential of OEO's programs and the courage of its leaders have been consumed by the expanding influence of a conservatism alarmed by Vietnam and fearing inflation, the increasing alienation of the poor who remain unaffected by its promise, and the disillusion of liberals over projects controlled by precisely those institutions whose failures made the program necessary in the first place.

Since the goals of the program necessarily aroused the hostility of conservatives, its only hope for survival was to create a grass-roots political constituency among the poor themselves. But the poor were not mobilized, and the poverty program has fallen by default to the active support of the big-city mayors who find in it another supply of oil for their machines, with the frustrated liberals acquiescing because they are unable to create any positive alternative. Given this unradical sponsorship, the poverty program, if it is to exist at all, will focus on "safe" programs such as the Neighborhood Youth Corps and conventional Head Start projects which, like traditional welfare activities, hold out no possibility of creating basic changes in the society. Ironically, the anti-poverty program, though conceived in the spirit of social reform, has had less effect on transforming existing institutions than the traditionally less reform-conscious courts.

The Community Action Program (CAP) was to be the revolutionary core of the original anti-poverty act passed

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by Congress. The bill stipulated city, county, or multi-county boards to be composed of representatives from government, private civic agencies and the poor, which would administer and coordinate all the anti-poverty efforts in their area. Most significant, and most often betrayed, was the call for "maximum feasible participation of the poor."

In Mississippi, as elsewhere in the country, disappointment with CAP has been twofold. First, what was "feasible" turned out to be a tokenism which allowed for only minimal and peripheral involvement of the poor. Second, the jump from social impotence to a seat alongside the members of the power structure unavoidably aroused in the poor feelings of inadequacy and fear. An intermediate stage in which the poor could develop skills and confidence through experience of controlling an organization or a program was neither perceived nor provided for. The OEO favored throwing the unevenly armed forces together to effect instant "community" — with predictable one-sided results.

The creation of the kind of community action originally envisioned requires certain essential preconditions. First, in locales where individuals come from vastly different backgrounds (as in Mississippi and in virtually every American area of poverty) there must be a sufficient consensus, a perception among the diverse groups of common problems, a mutual self-interest in their solution, and psychological readiness to accept the full implications of cooperation. Further, the poor must have the kinds of information and skills which are necessary to participate effectively. And finally, innovative plans for eliminating the *causes* of poverty must be developed and supported. The consideration of only stop-gap palliatives for poverty creates the illusion of action but none of the substance.

When these three preconditions are present, the concept of community action through the mobilization of all residents and groups to fight poverty is sound. When they are not present, it is OEO's *obligation* to insure their development rather than to condone the establishment of structures which falsely assume them.

The disastrous effects of overlooking such unpreparedness for community action are painfully obvious in Mississippi, where not a single community has met the preconditions described above. It is self-evident to those who have first-hand experience of the state that there *is* no community in Mississippi. There are several communities split along economic, religious and, most blatantly, along racial lines. Although the long-range common interests of the two racial communities may be apparent to an outside observer, they are invisible from within the society.

The white community wants no part of a program in which Negroes participate as equal partners, now or in the future. No effort to deal with the root causes of poverty is likely, since the social policy of the white power structure has been to preserve a sufficient supply of cheap unskilled labor and, at the point where this population becomes superfluous, to encourage emigration. One moderate resident of Canton, Miss., requested an audience with the president of the Chamber of Commerce following the tear gassing of the Meredith marchers. He expressed his displeasure with the police tactics and argued that programs such as federally subsidized housing for the Negro community should be initiated. "Oh," replied the C. of C. man, incredulous at the naïveté of the suggestion, "but if we do that, then they won't *leave*."

The poverty bill projected umbrella community action agencies as a way to coordinate local efforts. However, the commendable desire to avoid wastefulness and inefficiency has in practice provided a device for blocking the creation of "dangerous" projects which threaten existing power relationships. In Mississippi, the establishment of Community Action Programs is clearly motivated by the desire to control all poverty funds flowing into the community. Most counties in the state began forming their CAP boards in earnest only after independent groups like the Child Development Group of Mississippi raised the specter of economic autonomy. The implications of independent insti-

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tutional forces with a broad popular base were not lost on local and state political leaders.

The considerable power inherent in CAP to prevent, rather than encourage, efforts to change the position of the poor can be seen in the process by which board members are typically selected. CAP boards in Mississippi are undemocratic and unrepresentative, frequently controlled by the county Board of Supervisors. In many counties this has created a situation in which White Citizens' Council members, Klansmen and police officials notorious for their mistreatment of Negroes sit on committees whose stated goals are to undo the damage for which they are largely responsible. As Fannie Lou Hamer said recently before a state-wide meeting of 2,000 Negroes in Jackson: "The people on those boards are the same people who were shooting at us in '63 and '64 — and OEO says that's okay!" Alongside these habitual custodians of local power sit Negro members of the community who are hand picked for their willingness to be parrots for the white community, on whom they remain economically dependent. The CAP boards also enjoy the cooperation of the "Negro power structure," which sees the new programs as a spawning ground for a leadership that might jeopardize its traditional position. One could hardly conceive of a less promising team of anti-poverty fighters.

OEO has made some effort (particularly in areas where protest from the Negro community has been most vocal) to make the CAP boards less blatantly unrepresentative. The usual solution has been to expand the current board by the election of additional poor Negro members. The number of new seats is never sufficient to wrest control of the board from its founders, and the poor Negro community remains powerless, and the more galled by its lack of "objective" grounds for complaint. In addition to these legitimate, but ultimately futile forms of election, cruder manipulative tactics are widespread. In one Mississippi county, when the existing board was informed by OEO that additional elections were necessary, it approached three Negroes and instructed them to call community election meetings. Their selective invitations brought out an audience which overwhelmingly elected the three to the board.

In summary, the CAP board structure in Mississippi is in direct conflict with the aims of community action stated in the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. The poor are again deprived of control of factors which most directly affect their own lives, and, as a result, lose the opportunity to acquire the competence which would allow them to sit as equals, able to represent effectively the claims of their group.

In fact, a traditional authoritarian pattern, which at best approaches humanitarian paternalism, is reinforced. The few immediate beneficiaries of the programs among the poor will receive a short-term boost to their incomes through their dole as "aides," but even these gains are contingent on the acceptance of whatever strings of dependency may be implicit. The danger of spawning such short-sighted poverty programs lies in the unwitting creation of a "low-level equilibrium trap" in which the human basis for continued growth is throttled rather than liberated.

What is needed, therefore, in Mississippi (and what is being deliberately rejected) is a training ground to provide poor people with new skills, confidence and competence, one in which they, as a group, can exercise control over programs which are more than hollow. The efforts of the Freedom Democratic Party and the Lowndes County movement have provided this kind of opportunity in politics—and to a certain extent, also, in economics, through the budding co-ops in Lowndes County and elsewhere. However, our primary concern here is with the "anti-poverty" bill and ways in which this intermediate stage of development can be provided for under it.

Since the direct control of CAP boards by the poor is unlikely, particularly in Mississippi, it is essential that government agencies become more receptive to the emergence of independent projects run by the poor.

A report of the House Committee on Education and Labor (No. 428, pp. 7-9) affirms that:

> The Congress has contemplated the existence of independent single-purpose agencies in the same community that [*sic*] a community-wide structure has been created. Such competitiveness and experimentation is appropriate in an area in which conclusive remedies have not yet been established.

This stated policy has hardly, if ever, been implemented, although it clearly would provide an ideal opportunity for groups that might otherwise be crushed under the heel of a Community Action Program which poor Negroes are unlikely to control in the present political environment.

Officials who fear that such projects constitute high risks must recognize that control by the poor does not necessarily imply the exclusion of competent professionals. When the help of specialists is needed, the poor have proved their ability to select it in their own best interests. An alliance of the poor and the professional on this basis holds out great promise for the fullest possible development of the human resources of the poor community. Such programs encourage democratization of the CAP structure from within by preparing the ground for an effective partnership between the currently divided groups in the community.

The Child Development Group of Mississippi is the only large poor-controlled and anti-poverty project in the state that has had the resources and the orientation to develop into an effective, creative force in the society. CDGM was organized in the spring of 1965 by professionals bent on regenerating an outmoded social order by working with the "untarnished" pre-school children, and representatives of the poor communities responsive to this new opportunity. With the encouragement of OEO, which had just begun to develop its nation-wide Head Start program, it grew far beyond its intended scope and found itself running a summer program for more than 6,000 children in eighty-odd communities.

At that early date, CAP boards had not yet been formed in the state and the Mississippi power structure suddenly found itself confronted with a force it did not control that enjoyed a government-paid budget of more than $500,000 a month. Support of the project was a daring political act by a young and pioneering OEO which has abruptly sunk into middle-aged conservatism, partially from the pressures exerted by Sen. John Stennis who made it pay dearly for

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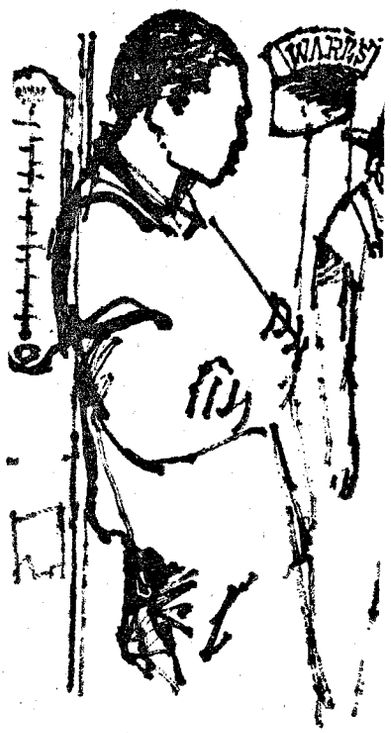
this encroachment on his home territory. Three of the four-hour hearings the Subcommittee on Appropriations held in October, 1965, on the $1.5 billion anti-poverty appropriation were devoted to a $1.4 million grant to CDGM.

As a result, OEO was far less bold when the request to refund CDGM was submitted in November of 1965. The money was not granted until late February, 1966, and only then after receiving considerable external encouragement from liberal organizations led by the Citizens Crusade Against Poverty, a coalition of civil rights, religious and labor groups, supported by such strong voices as Martin Luther King and Walter Reuther. This new grant assigned $5.6 million to serve 9,000 children in 121 communities for six months. As it turned out, the demand for participation was so great that 12,000 children were enrolled. At that time, there was little legal basis for denying funds to



CDGM, since the formation of umbrella agency CAP boards was still just getting under way.

The second grant officially terminated on August 31, 1966, although certain aspects of the program were allowed to live through October 15. On October 3, OEO formally announced that it was rejecting CDGM's proposal for an additional year of service to more than 13,000 children. The CDGM achievement is to be disposed of in two ways. In counties where CAP boards now exist, control of the Head Start Program is transferred to them, the changeover to be expedited by an eighteen-man OEO task force which has been in the state for several weeks.

The larger allotment, encompassing all nineteen CDGM counties where there is no CAP board, as well as forty-one other non-CAP counties in the state, will go to a secretly formed group, Mississippi Action for Progress, Inc. (MAP), which became known to CDGM only when news of its existence was leaked to a local newspaper. The formation of this board was initiated directly by Sargent Shriver, who in August approached Mississippi NAACP leader Aaron Henry and industrialist Owen Cooper and instructed them to round up members for the substitute board. Henry, in particular, was informed that CDGM was guilty of gross administrative mismanagement which would make it impossible for OEO to continue the program. Details of this charge have recently been published and show no problems which were not internally correctable. They were made known to CDGM only after their release to the press, on the day when the grant was officially refused. The decision was transparently political.

Henry collected his brother-in-law, a political lieutenant in his home town of Clarksdale, and two Negro businessmen, who, together with Henry, formed the Negro backbone of the Mississippi Democratic Conference, a now almost defunct coalition around which national Democratic headquarters hoped to create a loyalist party after Mississippi gave 87 per cent of its vote to Goldwater in 1964.

The white membership of the board was characterized by its opposition to ex-Governor Barnett, which in Mississippi qualifies one as a moderate. Hodding Carter, III, a Greenville newpaper publisher, is an officer of the Young Democrats of Mississippi, another embryonic loyalist group which has thus far been unsuccessful in gaining any constituency. Other board members include a second newspaper publisher, two plantation owners, a wealthy industrialist and the white director of a Baptist Seminary for Negroes. All in all, the board conspicuously lacks representatives of the labor unions, of the poor and of Catholics, who already sponsor a state-wide adult literacy program funded by OEO.

Perhaps more damaging than this precedent for bald political use of poverty funds is the retreat to a pattern whereby leadership is selected from the top. In effect, the "substitute" board has all the characteristics of a gigantic CAP board, selected this time by OEO itself rather than by the County Board of Supervisors. The lack of participation by the poor, the clandestine formation and the tie-in to the existing power structure (the charter provides for eventual control of MAP by the governor himself) are all too familiar to us from our examination of community action programs. The funding of MAP will result in the containment of independent poverty programs such as already exist in the Delta counties of Bolivar, Panola and Tallahatchie, all of which will face their own battles for additional money before the end of the year. The development of new independent programs will be almost impossible.

The elimination of independent, Negro-controlled programs appears to be a relief to OEO, which has come to see CDGM as a divisive influence in local communities. It has provided the Negro community with the resources to prevent its "integration" into "legitimate" structures, and has provided jobs for poor people who might otherwise have to remain part of the existing system on terms which they do not control. In the eyes of the poverty program officials, this has fostered a kind of separation which is equated with black power, a fright concept today which blocks any rational thought about race problems. They ask: "If we support an independent, largely black-controlled project, are we not in effect federally subsidizing some form of black nationalism?"

The answer seems to be quite the opposite. In many ways

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CDGM has been more in step with the stated goals of community action than the established community action agencies themselves. Since it is staffed, operated and controlled by the poor themselves, it is attacking one of the "root causes" of poverty. As a precondition to effective community action, the poor must obtain training and experience in exercising the responsibilities required for participation in the institutions of a highly structured society. By drawing people from the poor community into administrative and supervisory positions, while at the same time providing training in the necessary skills, CDGM was taking a major step in this direction.

In this context, black power means nothing more than developing the organization and skills already possessed by the white community, so that the two groups could relate to each other. In Mississippi, this would necessitate an intermediate period of what Christopher Jencks has called "paragovernmental" structures, within which the Negro community could compensate for centuries of powerlessness and the lack of opportunity to develop responsibility and decision-making skills.

Fears of a permanent system of parallel institutions are unfounded. (In addition, it should be emphasized, the continued existence of the K.K.K. organization and mentality which has led to public threats and intimidation of *whites* involved in these programs is an incomparably greater force toward separation and segregation.) Experience in CDGM had already begun to produce a better poverty program and a better community. In several counties in which it has been operating since its inception, CDGM-affiliated community people now sit on the CAP boards themselves and are in the process of building a bridge between the "parallel" operations, thus opening the possibilities of convergence in the near future. If CDGM were permitted to continue operating in the rest of the state, this pattern of increased community cohesiveness through the temporary support of intermediate parallel operations would no doubt multiply.

Instead, the parceling out of CDGM to MAP on the one hand and to existing CAP boards on the other, threatens to lead to what Negroes in the state have begun to speak of as the "New Plantation," on which the black man remains at the mercy of the boss man and the "head nigger," who stand between him and the decisions and choices which govern his life.

The parallels between these recent developments and the events of post-Reconstruction history are all too apparent. However, the actors may not perform their roles according to the old script. On October 8, 3,500 people attending a state-wide CDGM meeting in Jackson, voted to boycott the new MAP organization, to operate CDGM centers voluntarily until funds could be raised—from private sources, if necessary—and to seek a Congressional investigation of CAP agencies in Mississippi and a hearing for CDGM. In the Delta county of Sunflower, the home of both Senator Eastland and Fannie Lou Hamer, Negro parents have continued to operate their own Head Start program on a volunteer basis for the past eleven months, rather than subject their children to the already funded program run by the CAP board. Whether the stubborn integrity of this effort can be duplicated on a state-wide basis remains to be seen.

IRAN

POLITICS OF ANTI-AMERICANISM

MAJID TEHRANIAN
Mr. Tehranian is an instructor in political economy at Leslie College, Cambridge, Mass.

Persians have always had a soft spot for Americans. There are understandable historical reasons for this. Until World War II, the United States was only a peripheral power in Iran. Unlike Russia and Britain, which were major influences in the Middle East, the United States could afford to champion the cause of Persian independence from its "foreign oppressors." Moreover, the American policy of anti-colonialism well suited this role, and a number of heroic deeds on the part of private Americans in defense of the Persian struggle for democracy and independence also helped considerably. John Baskerville, a young American schoolteacher who was one of the first constitutionalists to fall in 1908 in defense of Tabriz against the siege of that city by the absolute monarchists, remains a "Persian" national hero to this day. Morgan Schuster, the American financial adviser, hired by the young and inexperienced constitutional regime, celebrated the cause of Persian independence against the diabolic machinations of Anglo-Russian rivalry in a classic book, *The Strangling of Persia.* American missionary schools and hospitals also made their contributions in the social and educational fields. On a less elevated level, the wooing of the Persians by American oil companies (Sinclair and Standard of New Jersey, primarily) struck some Persian nationalists as a welcome opportunity to break through the British monopoly.

The effect of all these factors was that the United States enjoyed an enormous reservoir of good will in Iran. However, the situation has undergone such radical change in the last two decades that the present regime in Iran now finds it profitable to engage in some anti-American politics of its own. And this, ironically enough, despite the fact that the regime has been brought to power and maintained there so far largely by United States military and financial aid. The tragicomic scenario of this turnabout is somewhat complicated, and its understanding requires a keen sense for the ironies of Persian political life.

For the origins of anti-Americanism in Iran, as elsewhere in most of the Afro-Asian world, one must return to the period immediately following World War II when official agencies of U.S. Government came to supersede pri-

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vate American charitable and educational institutions overseas. Practical requirements of American military and political strategy thus gradually overwhelmed the humanitarian idealism with which Americans had generally been identified. The change of America's image from a disinterested anti-colonialist power to the inheritor of colonialism and itself an arch-imperialist was, of course, helped by the Communist press. But the major responsibility for this transformation must go to the postwar foreign policy of the United States.

The occupation of Iran by Allied troops during the war, notwithstanding Iran's declaration of neutrality, was the real beginning of American influence. As a possible countervailing power against the British and the Russians, the Americans were at first welcomed by some Persian nationalists. In 1942, a mission headed by Dr. Arthur Millspaugh, an American economist, came to reform the government's financial organization. He was forced to resign shortly thereafter, largely because of his political ineptitude. In November, 1943, an agreement was signed to employ American military advisers for the Persian armed forces. There followed a series of other agreements; for trade (1943), for cultural exchange (1949), for sale of American war surplus (1949), and for technical cooperation.

The emergence of a strong nationalist movement in the late 1940s, led by Dr. Mohammed Mossadegh, provided an excellent opportunity for a real test of American intentions in Iran. Anti-imperialist, liberal-democratic and non-Communist, Mossadegh's government tried in vain to win over the Americans to its side in the struggle for the nationalization of Iran's British-controlled oil industry. When Mossadegh proved unwilling merely to exchange British for American control, it became clear that it was not so much communism that the United States opposed as any threat to its own economic interests.

With the CIA-sponsored *coup d'état* of August, 1953, which overthrew Mossadegh's government, any lingering fantasies the nationalists may have still held about American intentions in Iran fell apart. Mossadegh had presented a clear, viable and popular nationalist alternative to communism in Iran, but the United States rejected him in favor of a regime more securely in service of its own economic and political interests. The settlement of the oil dispute which ensued gave the American oil companies 40 per cent of the shares in a British-dominated consortium. This was the first time that Americans had obtained a working concession in Iran. Politically, however, Americans for all practical purposes replaced the British in the councils of state and fell heir to the influence the British possessed, as well as to the resentment they inspired. With the increasing U.S. commitment to the Shah's dictatorship, the simmering resentment and suspicion against American domination also grew, so much so that the American Ambassador, Selden Chapin, found it necessary in April of 1957 to disclaim publicly any attempt by the United States to "take" the country. The Bilateral Security Agreement of March, 1959, and the stepped-up military and financial aid to the Shah did little to dispel these suspicions, but anti-Americanism in this period expressed itself in such isolated but symbolic episodes as the assassination in March, 1957, of a few American officials by the rebel Dad Shah. Relations on the official level were extremely cordial and the government vigorously repressed any anti-American manifestations.

The advent of the Kennedy administration brought about a series of changes in official relations. President Kennedy's campaign speeches against U.S. sponsorship of military dictatorships helped to foster the rumor that the new administration would support the opposition in Iran. The subsequent cuts in American military assistance, prompted largely by persistent deficits in the U.S. balance of payments, gave further credence to these rumors. Once again the nationalist hopes for American support spawned fantasies. The liberalization of political activity during 1961-62, undertaken by a pro-American Prime Minister, Ali Amini, who came to power despite the Shah's hostility, provided some basis for a possible *rapprochement* between the National Front, Dr. Mossadegh's coalition of nationalist parties and groups, and the Amini government. The factors preventing such an alliance were recognized and clearly analyzed by Prof. T. Cuyler Young of Princeton University in an article, "Iran in Continuing Crisis," published in *Foreign Affairs* of January, 1962. In the end, the Shah's tactical political maneuvers, combined with his control of the armed forces, outwitted both Dr. Amini and the National Front.

In the internal strife which accompanied this power struggle, Americans were the most convenient and credible of all targets. The Shah increasingly blamed them for their lagging support of his ambitious military build-up — somewhat ungratefully, one might add, because he had received nearly $300 million in aid from 1952 to 1963. The National Front, stung by its memory of the 1953 *coup d'état* and the continuing U.S. support of the Shah's dictatorship, had abundant grounds for criticism of the American policies. American domination was, furthermore, the natural and obvious target of the Communist Tudeh Party's clandestine radios. Even the pro-American Amini found it necessary to blame the Americans for his fall in July, 1962. But the greatest damage to the American image was done, as usual, by American policies themselves. A bill which authorized the government to extend extraterritorial privileges to the American military was taken, under persistent pressures from the Shah and the U.S. Embassy, to the parliament. Even the hand-picked deputies of the Shah could not easily stomach an outrage strongly suggestive of colonial status; they put up an unprecedented opposition to the bill, although the hated measure was finally forced through in October, 1963.

These events would probably have had no dramatic consequences if Iran did not share a 1,200-mile border with the Soviet Union. American power in Iran is too firmly established in the economy and in the military to be thwarted overnight. But Russia's ever-present might to the north has also been difficult to ignore. The thaw in Russo-American relations, combined with changing security requirements of the Shah, has paved the way for peaceful economic and political competition to take place with mutual toleration. Persian observers have speculated that an Anglo-Russian understanding, reminiscent of their treaty of 1907 which partitioned Iran into spheres of influence, may be in the making—at the expense of the Americans. The fact that part of the pipe lines to transport gas from Iran's southern oil fields to Russia will be built by British concerns is cited

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as evidence. C. L. Sulzberger in *The New York Times* of January 28 conjectured still further:

> Moscow might be more inclined to mediate in the Vietnam crisis were it granted concessions elsewhere. There is no room for concessions in Europe. Such diplomats argue any concessions must come in Asia, and the only part of Asia where U.S. softening could directly benefit Russia is obviously that discussed above [i. e., Iran and Turkey].

Exaggerated though these speculations seem to be, they fit rather well with the Shah's newly pronounced conception of Iran as a buffer state between the East and the West, whose "independence" should be safeguarded by extending privileges to both sides. The nationalists object to this on the ground that the country's independence should not be compromised but rather maintained by refusal of unwarranted privileges to either side.

At any rate, relations with the Soviet Union began to improve in 1963 when the Shah, vexed by the American policy of sale rather than grant of arms, pledged that Iran will not become a missile base of aggression against the USSR. Following this declaration, which the Russians had sought unsuccessfully for some time, a number of agreements for extensive cooperation in economic fields have been reached by the two countries. The latest is a deal for construction by the Russians of a steel mill and machine-tool plant in exchange for the transport of gas from the southern Iranian oil fields to the Russian border. This was a successful coup for the Russians, particularly since the long-cherished hopes for an Iranian steel industry had been frustrated several times in fruitless negotiations with Western concerns.

What political capital the Soviet Union can make out of these developments will depend very much on their future steps. There are reliable reports that the Russians are willing, if not eager, to sell arms and surface-to-air missiles to Iran on the same terms that they have made them available to the UAR, Syria and Iraq. The Shah is once again using the leverage of Russian competition in his negotiations with Washington for more arms on the same easy terms the Russians are offering, i.e., prices as low as half the current Western prices and long-term credits at 2.5 per cent interest.

If the Russian arms deal goes through, it will have far-reaching and contradictory consequences. It would obviously gain the Russians hard foreign exchange as well as influence with the Shah; it would also open another of the Western satellites to serious Russian competition. Even Turkey, another member of the Central Treaty Organization as well as of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, is reported to be interested in Russian arms. All this may be a mixed blessing from the point of view of a Soviet-American *détente,* but the resentment of the progressive revolutionary forces, being squeezed between the two giants in their competition for the favors of the established ruling elites, will be inevitable. There are already clear signs of this in Iran. The pro-Russian central committee of the Tudeh Party, in exile in East Germany, has been isolated from its own rank and file, as well as from the nationalists who maintain a plague-on-both-your-houses attitude toward the United States and Russia. A "revolutionary" group to the left of the central committee has also sprung up to organize once again the Persian Marxist-Leninists.

In the meantime, the Shah's regime is putting to its own use the anti-American feelings the Persian public has had

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for a long time. By allowing some free expression of these feelings, the Shah is trying to gain public respect as "a ruler who could stand up even to the Americans," while increasing his bargaining power with the United States. Instances of officially tolerated, if not officially sponsored, anti-American expressions have been on the increase in the last year or so. The war in Vietnam has, of course, provided the most effective vehicle for press charges of American aggression and brutality. Editorials deplore American interventionism, citing examples from all over the globe except, of course, from Iran. A book entitled *Inheritor of Colonialism,* and quite openly anti-American, has gone into several printings, after being at first banned.

Official displeasure has been expressed indirectly at a seminar on Iran held at Harvard in April, 1964, by the Center for Middle Eastern Studies and the Iranian Students Association in the United States. The text of a paper presented to the seminar by Professor Young of Princeton, which was critical of U.S. policy for siding with the ruling elite rather than with the people, was severely attacked by the press after having been translated and secretly circulated in Teheran by the opposition. The daily *Ajang,* for instance, retorted that instead of discussing conditions in Iran, the seminar should have discussed American racism, assassination of Presidents, gangsterism, landing in the Dominican Republic and atrocities in Vietnam. Nor have other occasions, such as an American Air Forces Radio-TV station's slip in calling the Persian Gulf the "Arabian" Gulf, been missed by the press. And in recent months, the Shah himself has constantly hammered — in discreet but critical language — on his differences with the Americans on the questions of arms purchases and the level of oil production.

Asserting his "independence," he has not only veered toward a policy of trade and economic cooperation with the Soviet bloc, to the obvious displeasure of the American authorities, but has also turned to France and Britain for Iran's most recent deals in oil and arms. The petroleum agreement just signed in Teheran between the National Iranian Oil Company and a group of French companies is reported to be based on an unprecedented 91 to 9 per cent profit-sharing arrangement in favor of Iran. If true, that will further undermine the old 50-50 formula of the Anglo-American concessions. The arms deal with Britain for the purchase of $62.3 million worth of vessels and ground missiles may also be taken as a warning to the Americans who have been the Shah's sole source of arms. Significantly, however, the Russian arms deal—with its serious political implications—is being dragged on in the negotiating stage while the Americans are asked to improve their bargaining terms.

These are propitious times for the Shah to indulge in a potentially dangerous game. With Vietnam on its hands, the United States is at the peak of its diplomatic isolation and can ill afford to sponsor a military coup against him. In any case, the experience of the coup against Diem and the unsettling effects it produced in South Vietnam do not encourage another such experiment. For practical purposes, the Shah *is* the State Department's best alternative after all. The institution of monarchy assures relative stability; the Shah's armed forces have so far been armed and "advised" by the United States; the country is aligned to the West by the Central Treaty Organization and a bilateral treaty with the United States; despite quarrels about prices and level of production, the Anglo-American oil interests are guaranteed safety; and, finally, the regime follows an open-door policy toward the rapidly growing Western imports of consumer goods and business investments. Here is at least one instance in which anti-Americanism pays for American business and political interests — at least for the moment.

TO DIE IN VIETNAM

WILLIAM EASTLAKE

Mr. Eastlake, author among other books of The Bronc People *(Harcourt Brace) and* Castle Keep *(Simon & Schuster), recently spent three months in Southeast Asia.*

"Last week," the major said.

The American air base is at the foot of the Phu Pan Mountains where the opium poppies grow, in Northern Thailand close by a town called Vientiane. Even closer to the American air base, in a village where the opium is refined, is a caravansaray called the Kool Virgin where our American heroes can get a drink and massage. Beneath the sign of the Kool Virgin is a sign that says AMERICAN SOLDIERS WELCOME. LET FREEDOM RING. The Americans did not build the airfield near the Phu Pan Mountains to be close to the Kool Virgin, but to outflank Laos, Cambodia and North Vietnam and cut enemy supply routes called the Sihanouk Trail and the Ho Chi Minh Trail. But while we are breathing down their neck at all these places they are breathing down our neck at the Kool Virgin. Although our American airfield was not built near the Phu Pan Mountains to be close by the Kool Virgin, the reverse cannot be said for the Kool Virgin.

"I believe every virgin is a Vietcong," the American major said.

"Even a Kool Virgin?"

"Especially since last week," the major said. The major put down his Kool-Aid gin to make a point. "The only good virgin is a dead virgin. Right, Vallorosa? Vallorosa is my gunner. We fly Search and Destroy in a chopper. Must have killed a thousand gooks. Right, Vallorosa? Vallorosa is my fifth gunner, but the gooks will never kill Vallorosa. Right, Vallorosa?"

Vallorosa was a buck sergeant from Framingham, Mass., and when he spoke, which was not now, he spoke with a New England accent. He had a clean white scar over his left eye which was all you saw as he stared into his Kool-Aid Scotch.

"God damn it, Vallorosa, when I speak I want to be spoken to." Vallorosa didn't say anything and the major

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said to me: "Since last week Vallorosa kills everything that moves. Today he killed a flock of chickens, a small elephant, three gooks, a whole line of laundry and two Chinamen."

The major put his left arm around Vallorosa. "Vallorosa, you need another drink."

The major gestured to an elderly virgin for a Kool-Aid Scotch.

"Never, never, never disclose security information to the masseuse," the major said as though reminding himself. "Just a bit ago a young lady tried to sell me the plans for our new airfield at Udorn. You're not a journalist?" the major said to me for the fourth time.

"That's right," I said.

"Then what are you doing here?"

"Drinking Kool-Aid Bourbon."

"Then I'll tell you something for your book," the major said. "I'll give you all the specs on our new 4X Phantom Fighter that arrived yesterday. If the young ladies can sell the plans for our new airfield I can give away the Phantom 4X. Interested?"

"No."

"Top secret."

"No," I said.

"I'm an idealist."

"Tell me about that," I said.

"I've seen a lot of people die," the major said. I thought the major was crying but he hid it behind his glass.

"I thought the war was about something, then last week. . . ." The major paused. He still had Vallorosa in his left arm. "Then last week . . . well, you know all about it, don't you?"

"No."

"I thought the war was about something, then last week. . . ."

"Go ahead," I said.

"Last week the head of the government we're backing over here said his hero was Adolf Hitler." The major let go of Vallorosa and slumped ahead on the table so I couldn't see his face.

"Since then," he said, "I shoot everything that moves, chickens, flags, Americans."

"You need help."

"Who cares?" the major said. "You know what the commanding officer calls me?"

"No."

"An idealist."

"Oh?"

"Because I object to fighting for Adolf Hitler. I tell you, Billy, I saw too many people die. Too many people die, Billy. Too many people die. That's what Premier Ky said, Billy. Ky's hero is Adolf Hitler."

"You need a rest."

"I don't need a rest, Billy. Someone else does. Now we kill everything that moves, don't we, Vallorosa?" The major put his arm around the silent sergeant again. "We figured a way out. We got everything all solved. We kill everything that moves. Billy, cheer up."

He poked his glass toward me. I could see he had been crying.

"We'll drink to freedom."

I raised my glass and the major touched his glass against mine so hard that it rang.

"Let freedom ring!" the major said.

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awareness of the limits to what the Russians could get. An opponent remains an opponent even when that country's foreign policy is cautious and conciliatory. Any explanation of the cold war as the result of an aggressive American mentality would have to show that this mentality had no real justification in Soviet behavior and therefore arose out of specific trends in American society. I still do not think the evidence so far available warrants such a view.

On this occasion I also wish to apologize for a stupid slip in misspelling the name of the French economist, Robert Fossaert. *Barrington Moore, Jr.*

rebel off shore

Kirkwood, Mo.

DEAR SIRS: You may be interested in what Earl Attlee, England's former Labour Prime Minister, has just written me on President Eisenhower's recent remarks:

"I think the remarks of Eisenhower remarkably foolish. The proposed action would have been likely to lead to a world war. It is curious that he cannot understand the natural reaction of the Chinese to the continued support by the United States of Chiang Kai-shek in Formosa.

"Suppose a foreign power had supported Jefferson Davis in Bermuda after the American Civil War. What would have been the reaction of Lincoln's successors?" *Cyril Clemens*

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Marking Off A Chunk of England

DARK PLACES OF THE HEART. *By Christina Stead. Holt, Rinehart & Winston. 352 pp. $6.95.*

JOSE YGLESIAS
Mr. Yglesias is a novelist and essayist, and a translator of modern Spanish fiction.

In England, Christina Stead's new novel is named *Cotter's England*, and is not likely to be mistaken for a heart-throbbing addition to the shelves of a circulating library. Of course, it does not necessarily follow that the American title, *Dark Places of the Heart*, will keep serious readers from knowing what Miss Stead is about. The reissue last year of *The Man Who Loved Children* to uniformly prominent and good notices, twenty-five years after it had failed to sell out its first edition, may be insurance against flip dismissal of this one. Yet Miss Stead first published in 1934; for the last fifteen years no publisher has brought out any new work and, with the exception of the novel reissued last year, all her books are out of print. These are reasons for belief that critics and readers, not to speak of publishers, need every clue they can get.

Miss Stead's interest in showing how life is lived — what Randall Jarrell called her ability to imitate perfectly the surface of existence — has grown from book to book, along with her gift for dramatizing ideas. Impervious to literary fashions, she is now in serene possession of a fiction technique that is a perfect crossing (to use literary shorthand) of the Dreiser and James legacies: social documentation in which didacticism and moralizing are so transmuted that they seem almost entirely absent from either the surfaces or depths of her story. She throws reviewers not a single bone, she gives them no handle by which to place her, no text to explicate, no mythology to erect on her work; she seems simply to mark off a considerable chunk of contemporary life and say: This is the way it is.

But she does not do this simply. In her new book she has created a work in which narrative flow, characterizations and the supplest language achieve a classic unity, though she is so modern and original that no contemporary writer comes to mind with whom she can be compared to place her for a new reader. Miss Stead creates so integrated a form in *Dark Places of the Heart* that it resists paraphrasing or dismemberment for literary or ideological analysis. Throughout her writing career she has been working toward this accomplishment: a novel to which there can be no approach other than total submission.

This is not the demand of a fantasist, however, for Miss Stead has always answered the most immediate social questions about the various countries where she has lived and which have been the settings of her novels. She deals with common, accessible experience and immerses the reader so thoroughly in the scene that the reading becomes a life experience, not an entrance into that enclosed, other world of the novelist's about which it has become a cliché to speak.

After a decade in England, having wisely chosen to escape the suffocating atmosphere of McCarthyism here, Miss Stead now takes a long look at English working-class life and politics. The result is as authentic as was her last novel, *The People with the Dogs* (1952), which dealt with the middle class of New York's East 20s and Connecticut summer homes. (No other modern writer has her range of subject matter.) The time is postwar England, and the setting alternates between a shabby London suburb and a

THE DEATH OF THOMAS COTTER

Mr. Cotter had not been feeling very well, as he told it in his Sunday and Monday, his Tuesday and Wednesday pubs, his Thursday, Friday and Saturday pubs; in the Atheneum and football clubs; to his clients and colleagues in the insurance business; to the Mother Superior, and to Mrs. Riggs, a divorced woman who had been acting strangely since her divorce; and to all the policemen after whose health he enquired and who kindly enquired after his own. It was no surprise therefore when Mr. Thomas Cotter went into hospital and it was in the local newspapers as an item of interest; Thomas Cotter, who as a young professional footballer had played for Wales.

Mr. Cotter had an anesthetic and went under the knife; and when he came out of it he was worse than before. "They kept me in the hospital," the big man said genially, between spasms of agony, "for they had to empty the liquor out of my veins and put blood in before they would operate. They tested me: they found I was ninety proof"; and when his visitors twitched and paled to see him lying down there in such terrible pain, he said in his large way, "It's not the worst; the very worst is Tuesday, when they'll be talking about me at the Cross Keys, if I'm not there, as if I were a dead man. It's Tuesday and where is Thomas Cotter? I don't like to think of it." His next operation was to be in a few days. The first had been a success; "If that's what you call a success," he said, jumping at a stab of pain; "I was all right, I was just a little down, till they started on me and found out all my secrets! And now they can't stop; they've got to go on and on." But on Wednesday, he couldn't help feeling depressed that he was absent from the Princess, his Wednesday pub. What would they be saying, that Thomas Cotter was a goner? On Thursday, the night before his operation, with his stitches and his pain, he got out of bed at eight o'clock at night, put on a hospital dressing gown and telling a taxi driver he knew, whom he found outside the hospital gates, that he was discharged, he got him to unload him at the Ravenscourt, his Thursday pub. There he had a fine time, half doubled with pain, but of interest to all, before the taxi driver, struck with doubt, and the tavern-keeper, struck with compunction, insisted upon getting him back to hospital; for now, for the lark and for the pain, Mr. Thomas Cotter freely admitted that he had climbed the wall, fooled the sentry, escaped from jail. He got back somehow and pretended that he had only been a bit of time in the men's room; and the next day, he died under the anesthetic, so that he would have felt himself quite justified in going out for his last drink, if he could have known.

— From *Dark Places of the Heart* by Christina Stead

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northern industrial town. Its central figure is Nellie Cotter, a left-wing journalist married to a labor leader, and the story is an exploration of her relations with her family in the industrial north and the stray, disoriented women who come and go, along with her husband, in the London house, where she's a free-and-easy hostess.

It is a period in Nellie's life when her husband is often away on the Continent, angling for a bureaucratic job with an international labor organization. She fills up her days dashing off to cover labor stories, seeing her family in the north, drinking and fulsomely talking with one friend or another at home and in pubs, and attempting to bind more closely again a brother who is roaming the country with a mistress dying of cancer. In the course of the novel her parents die, one woman friend commits suicide, the brother returns briefly when his mistress dies, and the Lesbian base of Nellie's philosophizing becomes shockingly plain. In the novel's last pages, the husband gets just the kind of job he wants; they move to Geneva; he dies within a year, and Nellie is back alone in London, on the prowl.

None of this takes place as plot, but in the messy, disorganized ways of life; the talk is large, the concerns are petty, and in the interplay of Nellie's illusions and life's hard facts the narrative moves along, shaping the characters and their actions in directions that neither the cast of characters nor the reader expects. It is Miss Stead's extraordinary accomplishment that her style manages to create both suspenseful readability and the sense, which day-to-day life often has, that nothing is happening. (She in fact takes the entire book to explore a year in Nellie Cotter's life, but in two paragraphs she will do the death of Nellie's father in such a fashion that his whole life is limned in.) When the book is done, it comes as a surprise that so much *has* happened and that one has grasped so well the significance of the Cotters' England; this sort of thing can happen in life only in those rare moments of illumination when experience falls into place.

It is only at the end, after the reader has submitted himself to the experience of Miss Stead's story and put the kind of distance between it and himself similar to the novelist's to his material, that the basic questions of intent and meaning arise. During the reading, Miss Stead's wit, compassion and technique have served to keep the reader's cognitive and moralizing responses at bay, to make him live her people's lives as if he were a character in the book. Nellie Cotter is, in a flat sense, the grubbiest of characters: one of those unwisely tolerant bohemians who attach themselves to every radical movement or reformist cause and move out of it again, usually because it is not "big" enough to contain them; they often end, as happens with Nellie, in some crackpot circle, Far Eastern in inspiration or home grown. But Miss Stead's ear (Nellie's passionate clichés have an eloquence of their own) and her eye (Nellie's physical presence and her environment are palpably there) and psychological wisdom (Nellie's neurotic rationalizations contain remarkable insights into others) turn her major character, and everyone who comes within Nellie's grasping reach, into living presences, full of color, charm and fascination.

Miss Stead's insistence on not allowing the reader to make particular judgments is due to the curiosity about, and understanding of life she wants to pass on; it is also, in a cool and tough way, a method of guiding him toward a judgment that is inevitable and more profound. She has earned the right, at the novel's end, to ask the reader to come to some conclusions which should carry over into his own way of living. In this, she is old-fashioned and belongs in the great tradition.

The questions she makes the reader ask are always social and revolutionary in intent. In the present novel it is obvious (though one should be wary of this adjective when dealing with so neglected a great novelist) that she has asked why the English working-class movement has not made the revolution. Though she deals only with its fringes and does not go to the center of its trade union, Labour Party and intellectual circles, she has recreated the full ambience of its opportunism, charlatanism and demoralization. Her unspoken judgment is as harsh as the explicit ones of Balzac, Proust, Joyce; unlike them, however, she does not base her critique on the better life of another age, or turn inward or withdraw or become nostalgic.

Why, then, has she not received a measure of their recognition? Contrary to popular belief, great writers seldom go unhailed in their lifetime: there are only a couple of cases, like that of Stendhal, to a century. But because Miss Stead seems so old-fashioned, she doesn't interest the *avant-garde*; because her vision is so radical, she disquiets the mass of readers who are middle class; because she is original and tough-minded, left wingers feel no comfort of recognition. Yet for everyone she has one cementing, indispensable attribute: a sensual, deeply joyous appreciation of how life is lived. Once again she gives us another chance. *Dark Places of the Heart* is a great novel; it should not have to wait twenty-five years for its readers, for in the wings stand eight out-of-print novels which can tell us, as Balzac did for the same period a century ago, how the world has chosen us to live these last thirty, dirty years.

In the Air of Several Worlds

VIRGIL THOMSON. *By Virgil Thomson. Alfred A. Knopf. 424 pp. $7.95.*

HAROLD CLURMAN

On the last page of his book about himself Virgil Thomson declares that as long as he remains alive he will "fulminate." But Thomson never "fulminates"; he thrusts deftly and moves on with a concealed smile which is almost as bland as it is mischievous. He thinks of his music as sassy; it is generally cute, even "darling." His readers might have thought him a regular devil when he was music critic for the New York *Herald Tribune*, but he was, above all, a corruscating conversationalist of sound judgment and good taste.

He felt at home in Paris during the many years he spent there but he loved it because it reminded him of Kansas City! He does not precisely mean this but it is something of what he does mean, and for the sake of the fun he often says things which throw partial light on his true meaning.

This duality in Thomson which may irritate a few and charm many is altogether characteristic. Every phase of his work — writing and music — reveals the honorable citizen, the "good boy" beneath the surface of the sophisticated and slightly malicious cosmopolite.

He is no Christian, he tells us, but music he heard in Missouri churches supplies material for much of his composition. "His mother had prayed for him to hear the 'call' and become a preacher. He himself had become resigned to not hearing it." But he *is* a preacher and of a kind that our folk can embrace. "Whatever the government [he's] agin' it," but his rebelliousness is of the sort which no one need fear. He will always return to cultivating his garden. (But what if there were to be no more gardens?) After the outbreak of the Second World War he remained in Paris until the bombs began to fall, occupying himself "with the central esthetic problem in music today, the creation of an acceptable style-convention for performing Mozart." Shocking and delightful.

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He writes extremely well. His style is straightforward, colloquial speech set in a syntax of almost Georgian elegance. Reading him one seems to be bathed in the air of several worlds: that of the English 18th century, our Middle West, New York and Paris. He skirts the fringes and occasionally appears to mix with "international snob bohemia" but he never joins it. He is too much the honest worker.

His permanent art heroes are the minor masters: Erik Satie and Gertrude Stein. These admirations fit his pattern. For all his playfulness Satie was essentially a modest composer, even a grave one; grandiose rhetoric was abhorrent to him. Satie wanted to create, Thomson says, "a musical reality as real as an apple or a child." Here we return again to Thomson's own basic simplicity or "fundamentalism." Then too he always and rightly refers to Gertrude Stein as a poet whose hermetic works he explains lucidly and plausibly. But perhaps her chief attraction for him lay in her basic attribute: an old-fashioned American hominess.

Thomson speaks of the "romanticism" of his music. The term as he uses it is more related to a classic bent than to 19th-century romanticism. The impression his music leaves is a homespun Americanism like the hymns heard in Protestant places of worship and the echo of small-town festivities. One of Thomson's early pieces, the *Church Sonata*, combines tango or near-jazz rhythms with something like traditional liturgy.

Some may conclude that this amounts to cussedness. It is really American horse sense, a calm resistance to bluff or pretense. Thomson has always preferred French music, transparent, light, moderately impersonal, to the huffing and puffing of latter-day German music sweating with self-importance. Yet for all that he has learned from the French he has always remained a stubbornly pragmatic red-white-and-blue!

For fourteen years the Thomson "mixture" made him the best critic in any of the arts writing for a New York daily. He knows it and admits it. Cockiness is one of the games he plays. When he says, "Description is the solid part of reviewing; spontaneous reactions, if courteously phrased, have some validity; opinions are mostly worthless," I entirely concur. As a critic he sometimes generalizes too glibly (as he does at moments in this book) but most of the time his rapid diction and winged witticisms are well grounded.

Readers in hopes of scandalous tidbits in this autobiography will be disappointed. Thomson's book is most discreet. When he wants to say something the least bit unseemly he employs euphemisms or circumlocutions that are almost coy and occasionally funny. He will say of a French poet that "he had just entered into housekeeping arrangements with a young woman," or speak of two ladies as "Amazons" to denote something else. He mentions suffering from "unrequited love" but he does not tell us on whose account. To this he adds: "My passion, like all my intensely conceived ones, came to nothing." In discussing intimate matters a certain detachment is always present. This is not a matter of reticence alone. Detachment is as much one of Thomson's strong points as one of his failings. It looks good on him.

To retain integrity as an artist or as an intellectual the American must forever remain intransigent. Thomson has been intransigent in the preservation of his personality. And his new book is best viewed as leaves of his personality. There is really more of the man Thomson in his critical writing (*The State of Music* and the others) than here. Autobiography rarely tells the truth about a person. Some of the boldest lie by exaggerating the writer's vices. To find truth, read fiction. There are too many inconsequential facts in this *Virgil Thomson*.

Still one does get a lively sense of the growth of modern American music when Thomson and others were trying to "establish" it. There is also a whiff of Paris and its arts in the book and we get to know something of Thomson's friends: the French composers Sauguet, Cliquet-Pleyel, the French poet Max Jacob, Sir Thomas Beecham, Roy Harris, John Houseman, and the painter-critic Maurice Grosser who is frequently mentioned but about whom we rarely learn anything specific.

One vastly entertaining section consists of an exchange of letters between Gertrude Stein and Thomson, in which they argue like two horse traders about the division of royalties on their opera *Four Saints in Three Acts*. For a man reputed to be capable of naughty spite he is remarkably free of hostility. The volume is profusely and admirably illustrated, adding much to its vividness and to our pleasure.

Leaving Out the Letter 'E'

THE COMMUNIST CONTROVERSY IN WASHINGTON: From the New Deal to McCarthy. *By Earl Latham. Harvard University Press. 446 pp. $7.95.*

FRANK J. DONNER
Mr. Donner is a New York attorney who specializes in constitutional law and civil liberties cases. He is the author of The Un-Americans *(Ballantine).*

A controversy involving national security has agonized and riven the country during the course of each one of the last three decades: the Red-hunting investigations beginning in the thirties and the ultimate institutionalization of the Congressional anti-subversive committees; the charges by Chambers and Bentley in the forties of espionage by Communists in the employ of the government; and the flowering of McCarthyism in the fifties. These conflicts still wound and torment us. Court decisions, jury verdicts, commission reports, Executive orders, Congressional declarations — official acts which sometimes seal up hostilities over great national issues — have, in this case, merely supplied one side or the other with fresh ammunition.

Earl Latham's study is very important. One of a series on "Communism in American Life," originally sponsored by the Fund for the Republic and written by the head of Amherst's Political Science Department, it is a scholarly examination of the attacks on politically suspect government employees; an academic attempt to analyze the techniques of the anti-subversive committee, and one of the first treatments by a political scientist of the relationship between McCarthyism and legislative investigation, as a "mode of governance." While not aimed at the general reader, its intended audience is not merely the specialists who have been eagerly awaiting it for years (Latham had been working on it since at least 1957).

The book arches over an enormous area: the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International in 1928 ("the strategy of alienation"); the soft, popular-front Communist line which emerged in 1935 ("the strategy of enticement") and its impact on the professionals and intellectuals who were recruited into the New Deal; the organized Communist groups in the federal Establishment; the espionage charges of Chambers and Bentley; the Amerasia case; the Tydings Committee's probe of Senator McCarthy's charges against the State Department; and the investigation by Senator McCarran of the Institute of Pacific Relations.

The Communist issue ("the politics of hysteria"), the more original portion of the study, deals with McCarthyism, the political exploitation of the Communist "problem." McCarthy, in Latham's view, was the instrument of traditional Re-

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publican conservatism, rooted in the Midwest and far West, which is now and since 1940 has been locked in a bitter intramural struggle with the liberal Easterners for control of the Republican Party. Latham's analysis of McCarthyism is rich in important insights, but it ultimately does not persuade because it does not explain why the political exploitation of the Red issue worked. It fails to take account of McCarthy's affective appeal, so skillfully analyzed by Richard Hofstadter. It was not fundamentalist conservatism alone which gave McCarthy the approval of half the electorate in January, 1954, according to the polls, but his capacity to move transient anxieties and passions to new emotional heights by placing them in an apocalyptic context ("the battle for America").

Nor does Latham take into account the extent to which many American liberals contributed to the success of McCarthy. The attractions and pressures of the cold war recruited American liberals to the politics of anti-communism, almost without a struggle, and led them to embrace a fake NATO-ized "freedom" as a justification for suppressing the old-fashioned variety. As anti-communism became a national religion (it still is), liberals—reinforced by droves of recanting Communists seeking to purge themselves of the Stalinist taint, together with their former anti-Stalinist ideological rivals on the Left—became its theologians, authenticating its rituals and deploring its occasional frenzies. They developed a fruity rhetoric of conspiracy and refined moralizing justifications for increasingly coarse political perceptions. This cold-war *trahison des clercs* in turn created a climate which strengthened conservative trends in the social sciences and which enthroned "neutral" (i.e., politically safe) quantifying and behavioral modes of interpreting our society and its institutions.

Latham's book is itself an example of the ritualistic anti-communism of American intellectuals—all the more striking because it comes at a time when the faith is beginning to lose some of its support. The author insists (without a shred of proof) that the Communists did, in the fifties, menace our institutions (both inside and outside of government), and that all the legal steps taken by the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, including purging the federal establishment of "loyalty risks" (a euphemism for nonconformists of all shades), dealt with this alleged menace "not inadequately." Latham's failure to deal with the federal employee loyalty program—beyond suggesting in passing that its purgative efficiency weakened McCarthyism by eliminating its targets—is a measure of the extent to which his anti-Communist assumptions have overwhelmed his detachment. For this program, which after all lies at the very heart of his subject, bristles with oppression. And the author's anti-Communist rhetoric more than matches his assumptions. It ranges from the floridly moralizing ("the Communists were seeking to take democracy from the Democrats and, by pre-empting its values, to monopolize—and to make squalid with ulterior intent—decent impulses of democracy and humanism in American culture"); the sneering hyperbole (Elizabeth Bentley is seen as a "simple school teacher working for ferocious goals of world domination," bent "on freeing the toiling masses of the oppressions of bloodthirsty capitalistic masters"); the irrelevant gibe (John Wexley's moving play about the Scottsboro case, *They Shall Not Die*, is said to have been "done in a vaudeville dialect that even Amos and Andy would have found grotesque and objectionable"); to a Jamesian *de haute en bas* drawl of contempt ("a [Communist] principle of philosophic grace—the principle of democratic centralism").

His acceptance of the Chambers-Bentley charges results from no fresh investigation of the facts, interviews with the principals, or discovery of new documents. He concludes that party members "and their supporters" occupied "numerous positions" in the federal government (his estimate of actual party members in the thirties is seventy-five out of about half a million federal employees in Washington); that they co-opted one another into federal jobs but without a politically inspired plan of infiltration and were organized into groups which had no meaningful influence on policy formation but which had "espionage functions," a highly ambiguous conclusion since Latham does not use the term "espionage" in a technical sense, as a state crime, and never bothers to define what he does mean by it.

Latham fails to tell the reader that before the Chambers and Bentley disclosures were aired before a Congressional committee they were investigated for a period of fourteen months by a federal grand jury—the same body which indicted the twelve Communist Party leaders — and that no espionage indictments were returned. This circumstance would indicate at the very least that the " 'confidential information' which is alleged to have passed into Communist hands must not have been of very great importance," as *New York Times* reporter Cabell Phillips observed at the time. In fact, Chambers himself conceded that "political espionage" by government employees "was a magnificent waste of time."

In Latham's view, the gravity of the "problem" cannot in any event be determined by evaluating the hard evidence. But if there was more then than meets the eye now, he does not establish it. The quality of his reservations is indicated by his comment on the testimony of a cooperative ex-Communist federal employee witness before the Un-American Activities Committee that the party members at his agency were told and believed that they could best discharge their obligations by a zealous devotion to their duties. Such statements, according to Latham, "illustrate the confusing blur of democratic and dialectical values, to which a form of self-hypnosis contributed. . . . The silence of the cell about its affiliation betrayed the secret guilt that covert membership may have suggested to the sensitive."

Latham has substituted for the traditional emphasis on political institutions and their normative roles, a "value-free" scrutiny of political behavior. He banishes from his frame of reference the prohibitions of the Constitution, and especially the First Amendment; court decisions and the limitations imposed on our institutions by the tripartite system and the mechanisms of checks and balances also fall by the wayside. In this way, Latham plucks his inquiry out of its crucially relevant

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context, for these democratic restrictions on the exercise of power are facts which interact with and condition the functioning of the committees; indeed, they are the "factors which make the facts." The approach is reminiscent of a word game in which a contestant is required to write a 100-word essay without using a word containing the letter "e." Though it can be done, the results are usually bizarre.

Latham develops a case for the anti-subversive probe by describing it in an abstract and artificial way and divorcing its operation from reality. Thus he dubs what lawyers and courts call "exposure," the *modus operandi* of the anti-subversive Congressional committees, "prescriptive publicity." He defines this as a "form of public notice intended to instruct and deter" which "stopped short of enactment and was therefore not fully ritualized." To translate from this academese: Latham contends that investigative exposure is really in itself a sort of instant statute, slightly foreshortened, a piece of legislation to which something funny happened on the way to the forum—it was not enacted. But this attempt to make exposure respectable is invalid if for no other reason than that the identifying essence of the anti-subversive investigation is not "prescription" but its opposite, "specification," the use of power directly against the witness to punish him for his politics.

The author's ultimate defense of his analysis is a negative one—that the critics of the anti-subversive committee system are inconsistent. Thus he insists that the New Deal investigations and those of the twenties (like Teapot Dome) are precedents for later exposure probes. But the earlier investigations were directed at conduct and not at speech and association. Latham rejects this distinction and berates the liberals for inconsistency because, in his view, joining the party is also a form of conduct. But the issue posed by the anti-probe forces cannot be transformed into a metaphysical debate. The issue is a constitutional one: whether the characteristic inquiry of the exposure committee ("Are you now or have you ever been a member of the Communist Party?") involves an invasion of the First Amendment area. Because Latham has forsworn the letter "e," he has barred himself from considering an issue crucial to his study—namely whether the exposure system is consistent with the protected freedoms. (Only the tenacious pursuit of irony has forced him to deal with the question even in passing.) What is even more astonishing is his failure to take note of the Supreme Court's ruling that the very disclosures to which he has denied distinguishing significance invade the First Amendment.

In developing the thesis that the liberals of the thirties originated the later anti-subversive techniques ("still another of history's depressing ironies"), Latham blurs another essential difference — the earlier investigations were fact finding and not punitive as the later ones were. The anatomy of anti-subversive exposure finds no counterpart in the investigations, either of the twenties or of the New Deal: the use of power to drive witnesses from employment and to ruin them; the recalling of witnesses several times if one exposure did them no injury; the requirement that the witness name others under the threat of contempt sanctions; the compiling of dossiers and the issuance of catalogues of condemned organizations to make blacklisting more efficient; and the operation of propaganda mills from which hate-filled literature pours in a torrent to a special constituency of rightist collaborators in the exposure process.

The Supreme Court has condemned this personalized "exposure for exposure's sake"; but Latham insists that the Court is "wrong" in failing to comprehend that exposure is really an (unenacted) law of general application.

Latham scolds critics also because they have been inconsistent in demanding procedural protection for witnesses, including the right of cross-examination, while they applauded the earlier probes. In the same vein he rebukes Justice Black for defending legislative investigations when he was a Senator and attacking the anti-subversive probes as a Supreme Court Justice. But they were not the same kinds of investigations and Latham seems unaware of the considerable extent to which the earlier investigations did observe the procedural decencies—including the right to cross-examination. And protest against the Red hunters' darling, guilt by association, is not an unrealistic demand for a form of protection not even available in a courtroom—as Latham sees it—but an expression of a libertarian concern for the damage to freedom which results when A is blamed for the views of B.

Latham's tin ear for the realities of the exposure process inevitably causes him to misconstrue the responses of the witnesses under attack. These are easily explained as reactions to a felt threat: the witness who "presumes to instruct" a committee on the meaning of the Fifth Amendment is fighting to hold his job; the witness who is nervous to the point of incomprehensibility has not been previously intimidated by the Reds but is terrified by his ordeal; and the fiery shouter of defiance has not been "sent" (by you know who) to disrupt the hearing—he simply does not want to go down without a struggle even though the contest is unequal.

The author's lack of comprehension of the exposure system flows, in part at least, from his distortions of its origin. The launching of the Dies Committee in 1938 was not a response to a concern about "the threat posed to established institutions" by the 1935 Communist popular-front line, or by a fear of Red infiltration of the federal establishment. The Dies Committee was a creature of the Dixiecrat-Republican coalition to fight the New Deal. The huge 1936 pro-Roosevelt majority broke the back of the American Liberty League and its subsidized network of organizations. In 1937, the constitutional attack on the New Deal agencies was closed off by the Supreme Court decision in the Jones and Laughlin case. The Dies Committee sprang from the need to find a new weapon of attack. Its master strategy was to discredit the New Deal agencies as Red by smearing the employees who manned them, to use the same technique against private organizations and in this way to create a climate of opinion which would erode the New Deal majorities.

It was not because the line had become so blurred "between revolutionary ambition and mere nonconformity" that legislative investigation was embraced as an alternative to legislation. Dies and his supporters did not think that legislation was "inept" or "inadequate" to deal with a tricky new threat posed by fronts; they knew that legislation would violate the Constitution—and Dies repeatedly said so. Who needed legislation anyway when you could smite the Communist, the non-Communist and the ex-Communist with fine impartiality and escape constitutional censure? Latham's thesis is carpentered from abstractions far removed from the realities and is not even internally coherent. If the fronts were so sneaky as to defy legislative therapy and make exposure a more practical alternative, how did the Internal Security Act of 1950 come to be passed? And, after the *enactment* of this statute for policing the fronts, following hearings by the anti-subversive committees, why did exposure continue with unabated zeal?

Latham has denied his readers an appraisal of the exposure system in the light of the constitutional ban on bills of attainder, legislative punishment without trial. Before investigative exposure grew into its style, the House experimented with another form of legislative punishment of government employees, the rider to appropriation bills which withheld payment of salaries to named "subversive" employees. In 1943, the House passed such a Dies-inspired rider directed at three

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"subversive" New Deal functionaries. The Roosevelt administration made a momentous decision to fight the rider in the courts as an attainder. This decision marked the crest of the resistance by the Executive to the use of the Red issue by the Congressional coalition in the competition between the two branches for the control of policy. If the rider went unchallenged, the indications were that some thirty other employees were slated for similar treatment. In 1946, the Supreme Court in the Lovett case invalidated the rider as an attainder, leaving exposure as the coalition's chief weapon. Although Latham purports to summarize this important case in passing, he misstates its central holding, assigns an erroneous meaning to it, and never refers to the fact that the rider was condemned as an unconstitutional attainder—too high a price to pay for avoiding the letter "e."

Latham bastes his book with anthropological terminology without explaining its relevance, a procedure reminiscent of the facile Freudianizing in the social sciences. Because this terminology is used not metaphorically or to lend color but literally, it creates serious problems of meaning. Judicial review of acts of Congress, for example, is not a "custom of the culture." It did not exist until 1803 when the Supreme Court decided *Marbury* v. *Madison*. "Ceremonials," "rituals" and related terms are not valid descriptions of formal institutions or practices which have been created by positive law.

Of all of Latham's exoticisms, the most ambitious is his attempt to legitimate exposure as a practice which is sanctioned by the "culture." (Not the least of the difficulties raised by the author's anthropological sorties is his selectivity; he never tells us why the right to dissent or an abhorrence of legislative justice has not yet been absorbed into our culture.) The desperation of this particular evasion of the letter "e," for which more than mere rhetorical support is offered, becomes apparent from the *mélange* of inapposite precedents which are cited, such as post-World War I vigilantism, Greek ostracism and the disgrace rituals of the Trobriand Islanders. (One can only wonder how the author could have overlooked such "culture-sanctioned" precedents for exposure as lynching or the expulsions of Ann Hutchinson and Roger Williams by the Puritan theocracy.)

Latham's study is, in the end, an elaborate apology for the Congressional witch hunt, the prime tool of McCarthyism. In the vacuum of suppressed norms, the noisome realities of the exposure system are transformed into a time-honored, self-justifying investigative routine, perfected and approved by the very liberals who now criticize it most bitterly, and the witch hunt itself takes a bow in a glamorous new role as an authentic political response to a grave threat to our institutions. Irony, pervasive and almost mechanical, silences the doubter and quietly flatters the objectivity of the author. Commitment, we are told, was a mask for opportunism. Now we will finally hear the bleak autumnal truth pronounced by the white-coated scholar in his laboratory. Will we? Most of the author's assumptions and conclusions are blatantly tendentious, and the facts he adduces to support his ironies are incomplete or questionable. If irony is the name of the game, this is the crowning irony.

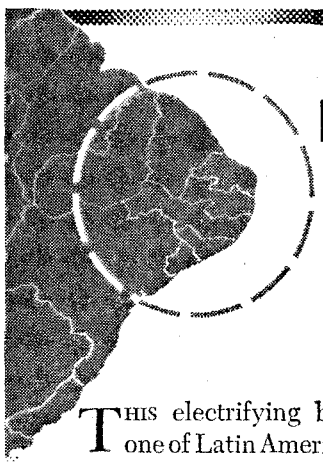
The Seal of Approval

TWENTYONE TWICE: A Journal. *By Mark Harris. Little, Brown & Co. 288 pp. $5.95.*

CHARLES R. LARSON
Mr. Larson, a former Peace Corps volunteer, teaches English and African studies at the American University in Washington, D. C.

On July 28, 1964, American novelist, Mark Harris, received a telephone call from Sargent Shriver inviting him to evaluate a Peace Corps project in Africa. Shriver told Harris he had read his autobiography, *Mark the Glove Boy*, and felt that Harris "was the kind of person who could examine the work of the Peace Corps and say useful things about it." The plan was for Harris to write a report for "internal circulation" which would be readable and succinct or, as Shriver put it, filled with no bureaucratic nonsense. Was Harris interested? Of course. When could he begin? Right away. Or so he thought, until he discovered that Shriver's call was only the preliminary to a revealing little drama in which Harris' sanity and loyalty were investigated by a "routine" security check lasting five months.

Harris' security check was frustrating and illuminating, but thoroughly familiar, by now, to hundreds of Peace Corps volunteers who have been similarly subjected



In the Northeast of Brazil, 23 million people are getting ready to explode in revolution

THIS electrifying book, by one of Latin America's best known social scientists, shows why. Dr. Josue de Castro — himself a native of the region — graphically reveals conditions of destitution, disease, and feudal backwardness on a scale Americans little suspect and can hardly conceive. He indicts the Alliance for Progress, which helps mainly to support the old order. And he gives frightening substance to the warning of *The New York Times'* Tad Szulc that "the Northeast will go Communist and have a situation ten times worse than Cuba if something is not done."

DEATH IN THE NORTHEAST

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to what is commonly known in volunteer jargon as "limbo"—a reverse kind of cultural shock which reduces the person to something less than a human being.

Harris waited weeks and weeks for his clearance, thought up ways to get even if he were turned down and sometimes considered chucking the whole thing. By the time the Peace Corps had "stamped his ass" (to use Harris' own term) with the Good Housekeeping seal of approval, he had solved the problem of retaining his sanity by keeping a journal. The result is a thoroughly compelling document of cultural breakdown, for Harris has used the face of his Peace Corps experience and African trip as a kind of cracked mirror, reflecting — in pieces — the problems and inadequacies of his own culture. Reading his journal, one gets the distinct impression that the United States—as well as the country Harris will eventually visit—is also a developing nation and that the United States' reverse form of cultural shock is far more disturbing than any of the problems confronting the newly independent nations of Africa.

Twentyone Twice is a record of Harris' dialogue with the inner self—the inner depths of a sensitive man 42 years old, who realizes that if there had been a Peace Corps when he was 21, he would have joined. "I wouldn't mind being the Ernie Pyle of the Peace Corps," he writes, before his enthusiasm is subdued by official red tape. But later, when the frustrations of limbo begin to get to him, he admits he is rapidly losing touch with the culture around him. "Can I Make Contact with the United States of America? Does America Permit Growth and Maturity?"

Harris is not just writing to expose the FBI's investigatory process—by now we are all familiar with the enormous records kept on us. Though he becomes haunted with the idea that he will be rejected, he never loses all of his faith in his country. He whines, he mopes, he sends off telegrams to Washington:

> IT'S ALL SO LUDICROUS I DON'T KNOW WHETHER TO LAUGH OR CRY. I WAS NEVER A COMMUNIST. AT AGE 21 I MINGLED WITH PEOPLE WHO PROMISED TO SAVE US FROM WHITE SUPREMACY AND POVERTY. AFTER AGE 21 TIME AND INTELLECT IMPROVED MY COMPANIONSHIP. I AM STILL OPPOSED TO WHITE SUPREMACY AND POVERTY, AND I THINK I AM ESPECIALLY WELL SUITED TO UNDERSTAND THE MOOD OF KIDS AGE 21 WHO ARE IN THE PEACE CORPS. IT'S TOO BAD I DIDN'T HAVE A PEACE CORPS TO GO INTO. PERHAPS YOU WILL SEE FIT TO PRESENT THIS MESSAGE TO THE COMMITTEE EXAMINING MY CASE. BEST REGARDS.

Like a child counting the days until his birthday, Harris becomes obsessed with the number of days since he has heard from Washington. His journal becomes a profoundly human fabric of daily trivialities, realities and imaginings, a strange admixture of brutal self-criticism and optimism for a culture he knows is often as precariously balanced as the one he hopes to visit in Africa.

During a personal interview, Harris endured the absurdities of two FBI investigators who had examined, among other things, his lifetime employment record. "I'm sure you know what you omit may be significant," one of the investigators informed him. Adrenalin coursing through his system, Harris was then reminded that he had forgotten to list his four-day job as an addressograph machine operator in Peekskill, N. Y., seventeen years before. (A review of Harris' early novel, *The Southpaw*, in the *Daily Worker* thirteen years previously also made him particularly suspect.) "I want my government to stop investigating me and accept me with all my faults, and I will do the same for *it*," Harris writes, when his patience is about to snap.

Harris finally got this clearance and his African assignment, which was to check the so-called "risks" in the country of Kongohno, and this is the substance of the second part of his journal. Obviously there is no nation called Kongohno, and Harris' reasons for obscuring the identity of the actual country make one conscious of the whole absurdity of international euphuistic games. (From a more probing side, one wonders what else in Harris' journal has been altered?)

When Harris got to Kongohno and began his interviews with the "risks" Washington had been so worried about, he concluded that the "risks" were exactly the kind of volunteers the Peace Corps needs if it is to remain unafraid and free. "The Peace Corps was itself a 'risk' when it began," Harris says in the preliminary summary of his trip, and the danger will be the organization's "forgetting its original ideals, and becoming timid, safe, avoiding 'risks.'" Ostensibly about the Peace Corps, Africa and the United States Government, *Twentyone Twice* more importantly is the inner record of a man who has digested more of his culture than most of us will ever even try to swallow.

Where the Stakes Are Real

THE NON-CONFORMIST: The Autobiography of a Conscience. *By George Abbe. Drawings by Rockwell Kent. Branden Press. 306 pp. $5.95.*

CHARLES L. SANFORD

Mr. Sanford teaches at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He is the author of The Quest for Paradise: Europe and the American Moral Imagination *(University of Illinois Press).*

In the 20th century, we have constantly been memorializing the last Puritan and the end of innocence. But as Mark Twain once remarked of news reporting his death, it was somewhat premature. Certainly, the Puritan conscience exhibited in this work by George Abbe is remarkably alive and viable.

In the form of a novel, Abbe tells a story of his personal struggle against McCarthyism. His trials began at Mt. Holyoke College at the outbreak of World War II. Abbe, a young English instructor and poet whose background included the ministry and pacifist teachings, decided finally to enlist in the war against Hitler. Surviving a surrealistic horror in boot camp, he finished the war instructing naval classes at Yale. Then came a teaching post at a YMCA college from which he was dismissed for critical analysis of the *Reader's Digest* in his propaganda classes. The only organized group which had the courage to defend him was the Communist Party, which he joined but soon left when it refused to permit him independence of mind and spirit. He was subsequently hired and dismissed by the University of Connecticut, the University of Pittsburgh, Wayne University and other places for publicly airing views which a great many intelligent people were privately thinking.

Though she stuck by him in the end, Abbe's wife retreated from him several times to the security of her parents' home in Connecticut. He accepted a pulpit call to Annisquam, Mass., only to be dismissed for his membership on the Committee to Defend Dirk Struik. Bill Cunningham of the Boston *Herald* later hunted him down and was instrumental in destroying his following in a rural pulpit in New Hampshire. The great witch hunt was on.

The characters in Abbe's book are vividly realized—cantankerous, yeasty, fearful, hypocritical, noble—never mere caricatures in a melodrama of vice and virtue. The stakes are real. Most interesting of all is the character of the author, revealed with honesty, a Chaplinesque figure groping wistfully from defeat to defeat, but somehow maintaining a dignity in the face of repeated humiliation at the hands

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of a vast economic machine. The overall theme is one man's growth in understanding and compassion without compromising his fierce attachment to ideals, including his faith in people.

The sources of his idealism are twofold: a semi-Christian mysticism which unites man, beast and nature, and an American democratic tradition which goes back to Whitman, Emerson and Thoreau. It is an inheritance which proves capable of assimilating itself to the needs of our modern industrial society, if we can imagine an Emerson or a Thoreau working in a Negro slum, collecting signatures for Wallace's Progressive Party, or fighting in various humble ways to realize a socialistic vision of brotherhood on earth. Does this seem incredibly naive, a willful distortion of American traditions? Abbe says:

> What we need is more naïveté in America, less hardboiled practicality and self-interest; for then, perhaps, we would *act*, for conviction, for principle, rather than holding back, saving ourselves as we do now for comfort, convenience, the secure.

But Abbe is not really naive. He is self-aware in all the ways in which a highly intelligent, educated contemporary can be: aware of the traps of temperament and of his own tendency to a martyr complex, aware of the dangers of self-righteousness, of ego — aware, above all, of man's great capacity for mischief and cruelty. He recognizes in this the vast distance between man and God, whose face is a "fierce axe-head" testing our worth (an image, incidentally, which hardly conforms to his pantheism).

The ultimate question Abbe raises is whether we are good enough in the mass or as individuals to achieve the democratic socialism he advocates. He believes the question demands a practical answer, since socialism may be the alternative to a total evil that could overwhelm our nation, for he seems to see us entering a new period of tension, hysteria and propaganda more dangerous than that of the forties and fifties.

Abbe's book revivifies a great democratic tradition: the strength to speak out against suicidal rigidities. In it, he has summoned forth a living presence which is completely believable, whatever the reader's faith or lack of faith, a presence filled with anguish, but also reverence and great beauty, and the wondrous brooding mystery that envelops all life. *Idea* coalesces perfectly with sight and sound and dramatic situation to charm and enlighten the reader and to lend the strongest support to the American dream. The book itself, devoid of bitterness and self-pity, is a magnificent revenge upon those who would silence him.

THEATRE / Julius Novick

Mr. Novick recently completed a survey of the American National Theatre for The Nation, *based on a Ford Foundation grant.*

Since I wrote about the Tyrone Guthrie in these pages some weeks ago, *The Dance of Death*—an excellent production of one of Strindberg's lesser works—has been dropped from the repertory. *As You Like It* and *The Skin of Our Teeth*—two entertaining and superficial productions that represent the triumph of directorial showmanship over drama——have been retained. And new productions of Shaw's *The Doctor's Dilemma* and O'Neill's *S. S. Glencairn* have been added. Both new productions are entertaining, in their varying fashions, but they did not dispel my feeling that something is not right at the Guthrie, that optimal use is not being made of its tremendous resources.

S. S. Glencairn is the overall title for four early plays by Eugene O'Neill that deal with the crew of a freighter plying between Great Britain and the West Indies; the faults of the Guthrie production, directed by Douglas Campbell and Edward Payson Call, are too minor to mention. This is a classical company, proficient in Shakespeare and artificial comedy; but Paul Ballantyne, Lee Richardson, Ed Flanders, Ken Ruta, John Cromwell, Len Cariou, Sandy McCallum and almost everyone else in the large cast deal with O'Neill's sweaty realism as if they were born to it.

Dahl Delu's settings and the uncredited lighting provide all the assistance our imaginations need to turn the stage into the deck or the fo'c's'le of the *Glencairn*. The actors, principals and bit players alike, singing sea chanteys in deep-throated chorus, perform the set changes most entertainingly before our eyes. But surely something is slightly askew when the set changes are more fun than the plays themselves. O'Neill's early études in the naturalistic manner are worth reviving when they can be revived this well; but they are not genuine classics, nor do they represent a voice from the past that at this moment we particularly need to hear.

The Doctor's Dilemma is also not a genuine classic, nor does it have any particular pertinence for us at this moment; yet I am quite willing to accept it as its own excuse for being on the Guthrie stage. It is perhaps a personal quirk of mine to prefer good-but-not-first-rate Shaw to good-but-not-first-rate O'Neill. Yet what has the *S. S. Glencairn* got to match the buoyant brilliance of Shaw's dialogue?

Dr. Ridgeon's dilemma is that he can treat only one more patient by his new opsonic method, and must choose between a young artist who is both a genius and a scoundrel, and a middle-aged fellow doctor who is a good man, but a nonentity; the one not chosen will die. Uncharacteristically, Shaw dodges the issue by having Dr. Ridgeon fall in love with the artist's wife and make his decision on that basis. The play suffers from its too-great length, from the featurelessness of its central character, from implausibilities in its plotting, and from the sheer cranky inaccuracy of its author's opinions about doctors. And yet, sixty years after its composition, much of *The Doctor's Dilemma* still plays beautifully, because Shaw's dialogue (as some tin-eared people still do not realize) was made to be spoken.

The last time I reported on the Guthrie, I wrote that "unless its talented directors confine their attentions to plays they like and understand, it may be in serious danger." Douglas Campbell, who directed *The Doctor's Dilemma*, is known

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to feel a special affinity to GBS, and so I had high hopes for the production. Mr. Campbell has indeed been duly respectful, and has not overwhelmed the play with "production," but he has managed to botch it nevertheless. As the dullish Dr. Ridgeon, Lee Richardson does all that can be done, and Robert Pastene is suitably crisp and dry as a surgeon who thinks that the answer to everyone's problem is to operate and remove the "nuciform sac." But with these exceptions, every important part has been in some measure miscast.

Ken Ruta plays Sir Ralph Bloomfield Bonington, the fatuous society doctor, in an ecstasy of burbling self-esteem; in twenty years he will be ideal for the part, but at the moment his white hairs and padded belly obviously do not become him. Mr. Ruta is so funny that only a perfectionist would be unwilling to forgive the fact that he is not the one young actor in a thousand who can play an elderly man with complete conviction; but the other miscastings are more serious. As the oldest doctor of all, John Cromwell is certainly old enough (and what a pleasure it is to see a genuine old man on the stage of a resident theatre), but the character is written to be sharp and gruff, and Mr. Cromwell's hesitant, gentle delivery tends to smother his laughs.

As the young artist and his fascinating wife, Ed Flanders and Nancy Wickwire — brilliant actors both — are too old. The wife is described as an unworldly, ardent girl from Cornwall, with more passion than brains; Miss Wickwire is unmistakably a shrewd, self-possessed American woman with more brains than passion. Mr. Flanders handles his comedy with irresistible, cheeky ebullience, but his death scene is a long failure. In spite of all his rascality and all his jokes, this is supposed to be a 23-year-old genius dying of tuberculosis before our eyes—think of Keats. If the scene is to work at all it must touch our emotions somehow, but Mr. Flanders is totally lacking in the gallantry and youthful glamour that might have made it pathetic.

Multiple miscasting is not the production's only fault. It might be asked why, in a theatre crawling with speech teachers, one single way of pronouncing the English language might not have been adopted for *The Doctor's Dilemma,* instead of allowing each member of the cast to speak English or American English as he pleased.

The Guthrie Theatre, moreover, with its thrust stage, is far from ideal for drawing-room comedy, and Dahl Delu's settings were not much help. Mr. Campbell's staging was often a positive hindrance. For long stretches in crucial scenes, I was nearly driven distracted by wondering when some actor was going to get his broad back the hell out of the way so that I could see what was going on. And when this consummation finally came about, it often served to block the view of another group of would-be spectators.

Mr. Campbell has demonstrated before now his insensitivity to some of the scripts he works with; but as artistic director of the Guthrie he might at least be expected to know how to use this stage, and how to use these actors. For the most part, indeed, he does; but you would never know it from *The Doctor's Dilemma,* which is only rescued by the splendid professionalism of the company (evident through all the miscastings), and by the enduring sparkle of Bernard Shaw's dialogue.

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RECORDS / Benjamin Boretz

MAHLER: Symphony No. 6. BERG: *Le Vin* (with Phyllis Curtin, soprano). Boston Symphony Orchestra; Erich Leinsdorf, cond. RCA Victor LM/LSC 7044.

Symphony No. 9. Columbia Symphony Orchestra; Bruno Walter, cond. *Das Lied von der Erde.* Mildred Miller, mezzo-soprano; Ernst Häfliger, tenor; New York Philharmonic; Bruno Walter, cond. Columbia D3L 344/D3S 744.

Symphony No. 10. The Philadelphia Orchestra; Eugene Ormandy, cond. Columbia M2L 335/M2S 735.

Although the Sixth is evidently Mahler's most interesting symphony, the very individuality and complexity of its internal ideas tend to make even more extrusive the theatrical "strokes"—march rhythms, snare-drum rolls and the whole gestural type repertory of "hymns," "Ländler," and "Liebeslieder" (or perhaps better *Liebestodlieder*) — that Mahler superimposed on these ideas out of an apparent inability to find a projective medium uniquely appropriate to them. Still, there are extraordinary passages throughout the Sixth Symphony, particularly the simultaneous unfoldings of linear successions, in varying multiplicities and densities, the transparent woodwind-, bell-, harp- and string-tremolo sonorities in the first movement, the extreme sonority changes that emerge from texturally continuous passages in rapid succession without losing the thread of continuity, and the still remarkably original-sounding opening of the last movement, with its single lines unfolding tenuously against an almost unrhythmized, bassless, tremolo background that gradually defines out into a fully articulated multilinearity to fill the entire orchestral range.

But in performance such qualities are all too easily submerged beneath the surrounding pseudo-trivialities. The nervous locomotion of Leinsdorf's approach, scarcely pausing to acknowledge a transitional point or to adjust the rate of unfolding or the manner of succession to the requirements of individual passages, combined with the almost uncontrollable crudity of some of the Boston Symphony's playing, particularly of its brass section, is hardly adequate to the task.

The performance of Berg's *Der Wein,* in its French-language version, is perhaps even more catastrophic from its lack of any evident observations of dynamic differentia in relations between orchestral and vocal inflection, in the muddled orchestral tangle in which at most one element is audible while innumerable details of inflection and sonority go unarticulated within the general

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THE MAILMAN AND *DAS EWIG WEIBLICHE*

Through a dark drizzle of rain,
Plodding to work on
mountain-heavy shoes,
The jumping thing to see is
The old mailman as sudden nun
float up to front doors
in black-draped raincoat,
hooded helmet
flare like a wimple,
and deliver the mail
through a driven,
coffee-tense scatter
of masculine commuters,
as if the envelopes were
sealed with quietude,
a female gift.

JAMES SCHEVILL

"background" morass, and in the shrill, uninflected and careless vocal performance by Phyllis Curtin. Once again, all these recalcitrant elements are efficiently thrust ahead by Mr. Leinsdorf, as though getting from beginning to end had the same relevance to music as to bus driving.

The "performing version" of the sketches left by Mahler for his Tenth Symphony seems to have been quite responsibly assembled by its resurrector, Deryck Cooke, but Mahler's kind of composition, in which the minute particulars of inflective details were far more significantly the loci of his most original ideas than the broad section-to-section characteristics, defeats this attempt to learn much about what the Tenth's ideas would have been like. One is aware throughout of the consistent absence of those attributes that are most apt to be remarkable in a Mahler work: one hears literal conjunctions of "lines" and instruments for long stretches, recurrences of ideas with identical orchestration, textures that suddenly drop out and are replaced without transition, and instrumental "entrances" and "exits" that seem to function purely as "color" but from no significant relational path. The "performing sketch" perhaps has its greatest value in making us vividly aware of what is left out; but this may be insufficient to warrant a project as expensive as the present recording, when so much of the significant, fully composed orchestral literature remains unperformed and unavailable. In this performance, the Philadelphia flows over everything with its customary indiscriminate competence.

Walter's Mahler performances contrast sharply with both Ormandy's and Leinsdorf's in the evident particularity of every attack, inflection, entrance, transition, cadence, textural or timbral change, and the considered variation of duration of each pitch in an "even" succession as well as a similar variation, on a large scale, of the tempo of sectional unfolding. The combination of cleanliness and plasticity of attack in the performance of the Ninth Symphony is especially endearing, particularly when judged against the strenuous Boston Symphony attack. And, by comparison with Walter's previous recordings of the work, the superiority of the vocalists in the present version of *Das Lied* perhaps overweighs some of its deficiencies, such as the rather remote and tenuous orchestral sound.

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FILMS / Robert Hatch

The Polish movie, *Salto,* comes close to being the obverse of *Our Town,* nostalgia without the hope of innocence. It also seems at the opposite pole from the arena of social violence that the Polish film makers were exploiting a few years ago, though Zbigniew Cybulski, who was the hulking Americanized beat hero of *Ashes and Diamonds,* plays the lead in the new film (and still leans heavily on dark glasses). The mood of *Salto* is end of the line, entropy; it is a tone I have not heard before from postwar East Europe.

The film opens with an apparently hunted young man dropping from a train and floundering through outlying impediments to take shelter in a nearby town. Like Wilder's town, this one is manifestly a stage set; there is no pretense that it really exists and it is empty save for the handful of people involved in the action. These include a good man (who takes in the fugitive); a retired military realist; a hedonistic womanizer; a child-exasperated poet; a nonentity named Blumenfeld who would assume the attributes of his namesake, a recently deceased actor of renown; a fortuneteller; the good man's daughter (whom the hero mistakes for her mother); a couple in love. One gets the feeling that these are all clockwork figures, set in motion by the fugitive who has apparently come this way before (he digs for a trove he had once buried and comes up with an unexploded hand grenade, which goes off in a nearby thicket). The poet rages at the stranger for having frightened his children, but a little later the stranger heals them of a sudden alarming illness. The good man confesses that he lacks the capacity for evil; indeed, he dreams of playing his neighbors a really nasty trick. His daughter sleeps with their guest, as presumably her mother would have done. The realist wrestles with him and is defeated; the fortuneteller has her fortune told; Blumenfeld prepares his stage debut; the hedonist turns maudlin. These encounters all start up with the abruptness of restored animation.

The climax occurs at the town's annual party to itself, held in the almost empty community hall. There the poet recites verses which include the observation that the times have become so shallow that men who fall now fall horizontally. Partly in response to this, the stranger teaches them all a dance—the Salto—which appears to be an exorcism of cross-purposes (when A sways left, B sways right), and one can feel a warmth beginning to creep through the hall.

But then a woman with two children arrives, to demand her husband. He is no fugitive, no one pursues him; he is merely a shirker of domestic responsibility and the monotony of married love. The villagers stone their visitor out of the town.

These proceedings are crowded with more allegory than I have patience to unravel or space to set down, but the overall intent surmounts the tangle of allusion. Life — frightened, hunted, quixotic,

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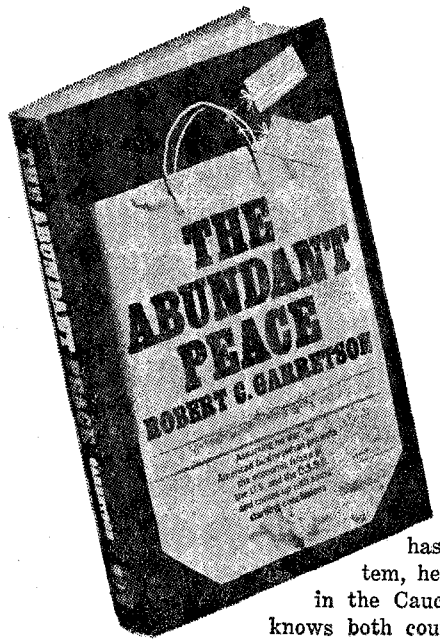

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cruel and beckoning — comes to a community parched for the lack of it into a state of paralysis. A dreamlike suspension begins to break toward awakening, but then life himself proves fraudulent, mere triviality decked out as desperation and power, and the townspeople drive him out. Coming and going, he interrupts two giggling girls who are bathing nude in a stream. They, presumably, are what the elders should be spying on if it is life they seek; but the circular futility of the situation is that the bathers are themselves lay figures of the community.

Tadeusz Konwicki has directed these proceedings in a style of sleepwalking outside of time; the characters express an oddly vivid vacuity and the effect overall is slapstick in a burial ground. The disillusion strikes me as woven deep into the piece, not worn as a costume for comment. It is a coldly memorable film.

John Korty is a young producer-director who relies almost entirely on his own resouces. The attitude is excellent and I wish I could say as much for *The Crazy Quilt*, the first of his pictures to be distributed commercially.

The film is based on a story with the mock-naive title, "The Illusionless Man and the Visionary Maid," and mock naive is the rather tiresome signature of the picture. A termite exterminator who hunches his shoulders and declares everything no damned good takes up with (eventually marries) a girl who flings wide her arms and declares everything just wonderful. He thinks every timber is rotten at the heart; she invests butterflies with souls. The struggle is to make him say "I love you," which he does along about their twentieth year together, the moral of the picture being that human life may have its inadequacies, but it is the only life we have. Somehow I knew that, and the rather ghastly spirit of jolly community theatricals that pervades the picture does nothing to make it more persuasive.

The exasperating thing about *The Crazy Quilt* is that from time to time it breaks out in blotches of excellence. Tom Rosqui, who plays the misanthropic termite menacer, is an eloquently impassive actor, the dialogue occasionally glints with a witty line and some of the ironic details (particularly when the wife seeks "fulfillment" with a succession of shoddy males) have the bite of recognition. But the effect was killed, for me at least, by the self-indulgences of its "let's make a movie" amateurism and its repetitious embroidery of the self-evident. Man's fate is all that the theatre has had to work with since the first savage tried on a wolf's skull for dramatic effect, and it is late in the day to proclaim that the meaning of life is the living of it.

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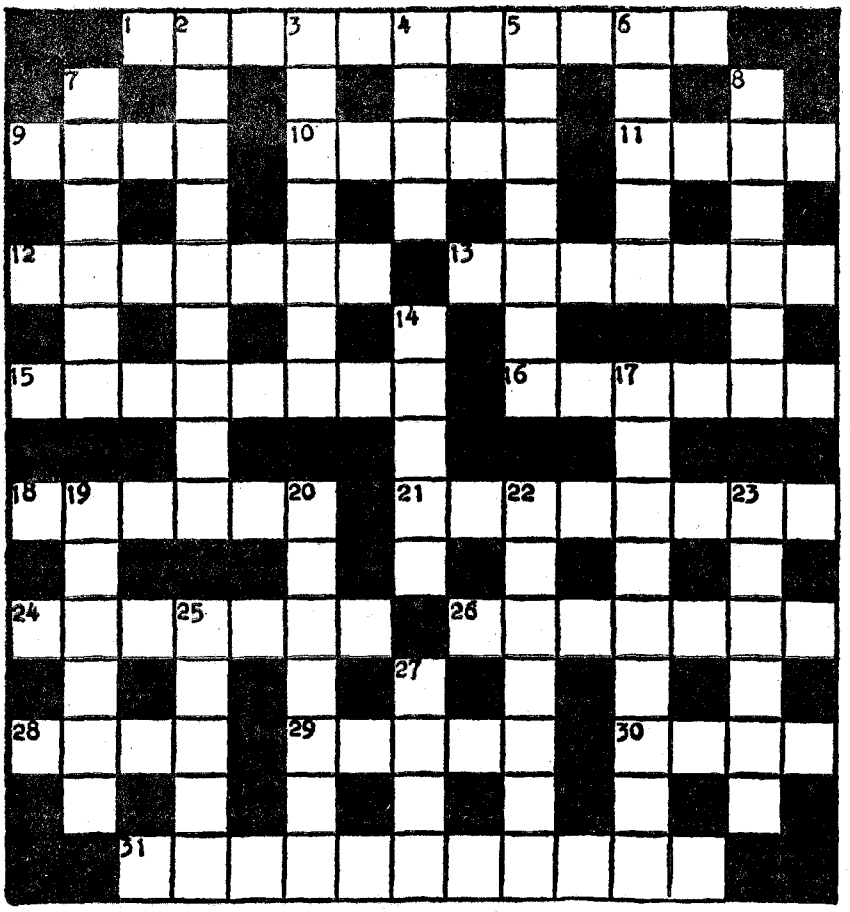
Crossword Puzzle No. 1172

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS:

1 Jumbo sales implied by it? (3, 8)
9 Her circle might suggest a one-course meal for some. (4)
10 and 28 Inferior to nothing more than a slight cold, certainly. (5, 4)
11 See 4 down
12 One way I help, on acquiring a simple camera type. (7)
13 Stolen gangster weapons? They might help in a fast get-away. (3, 4)
15 Food for a large number, little brother, in another continent is out of this world! (8)
16 A sort of battle commemoration on it, perhaps. (6)
18 Might it be put on after spats, as recommended? (4-2)
21 Palliated. (8)
24 It might seem peculiar to have an animal follow most of the procession. (7)
26 By the sound of it, those who have problems with their lungs or chests. (7)
28 See 10 across
29 Beat in time with Robert? (5)
30 See 7 down
31 Wet, nowadays, but one-time favorite in play. (3, 4, 4)

DOWN:

2 Press mount, associated with a plain roller in early days. (4, 5)
3 Doesn't quite catch the implication? (7)
4 and 11 across Leaves one's food, but one's work has material significance. (8)
5 City that suggests it could fit into an old bottle. (7)
6 Agriculturist who gets by as a composer? (5)
7 and 30 across One concerned with other than quick communication, rather uncommon with directions for one course. (6, 4)
8 Draw back in resentment more than a bit! (6)
14 Charles and Mary reputedly innocent? (5)
17 Serif? (Exhausts the source, possibly.) (9)
19 How one stood when home on the range. (6)
20 Charted a course, as Fawkes did. (7)
22 Certain animalculae. (7)
23 They might result from 3 in the field. (6)
25 The distinctive flavor of an Italian roadsign? (5)
27 Made an early-morning sound for the gang? (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1171

ACROSS: 1 Soapsuds; 5 and 29 A Taste of Honey; 10 Dignity; 11 Private; 12 Lilac; 13 Head-first; 14 Ticks; 16 Daladier; 19 Capstone; 22 Balsa; 24 Healthier; 26 Until; 28 Cottage; 30 Stroke; 31 Headland. DOWN: 1 Sodality; 2 Angel; 3 Suitcases; 4 Dry-shod; 6 Thief; 7 Stairwell; 8 Everts; 9 Sprawl; 15 Character; 17 Debouched; 18 Parleyed; 20 Oliver; 21 Earlobe; 23 Shocks; 25 Track; 27 Tonga.

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MR. PRESIDENT!

June 22, 1966

The Honorable Lyndon B. Johnson
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

...Our hopes for world peace, and our fears of world disaster, are centered at this time on Vietnam...

You, the United States Government, and Americans generally have looked for ways to end this unhappy war. The search has been extraordinarily difficult. Profoundly discouraging, too, has been the fact that the numerous efforts to find a path to peace in Vietnam have not only failed in themselves, but that we have been unable to understand these failures and to learn from them how we might succeed.

Much of our policy in Vietnam has been based on the historical analogy of our encounter with Nazism and Stalinism, an experience of ten to thirty years ago. A group of historians has now examined a past more recent and more relevant: the history of American involvement in Vietnam itself since 1963. Their findings are presented in the attached study.

The historians disclose a disturbing pattern of connections between negotiations and escalation, between political opportunities to approach peace and military actions that widen the war. The authors are well aware that, working only from the public record, their facts are incomplete and their perspective partial. Yet, the recent pattern they discern in the history of United States policy is of such grave import that we believe it to merit your serious attention: if wrong, to be refuted by evidence; if right, to become a guide to policy...

Respectfully,

Charles A. Bane, John C. Bennett, Eugene Carson Blake, Robert McAfee Brown, Benjamin J. Buttenwieser, Benton R. Cancell, Grenville Clark, Barry Commoner, Clifford J. Durr, William Eastlake, Marriner S. Eccles, Robert C. Garretson, Maxwell Geismar, J.W. Gitt, Patrick E. Gorman, Abraham J. Heschel, Robert M. Hutchins, Arnold Kaufman, Martin Luther King, Edward Lamb, Irving F. Laucks, David Livingston, Arno J. Mayer James G. Patton, B.T. Rocca, Sr., Frank Rosenblum, Carl E. Schorske, Jacob J. Weinstein, C. Vann Woodward,

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Since no adequate official response has been made, this white paper is now being called to the attention of the American people through the publication of an expanded book-length edition entitled

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